

GREAT HERMITS AND
FATHERS OF THE CHURCH



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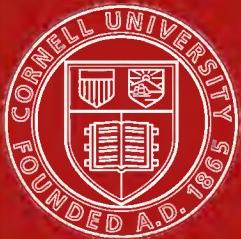
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THE SAINTS IN CHRISTIAN ART

THE GREAT HERMITS AND FATHERS
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A previous Volume deals with
THE LIVES AND LEGENDS OF THE
EVANGELISTS, APOSTLES, AND OTHER
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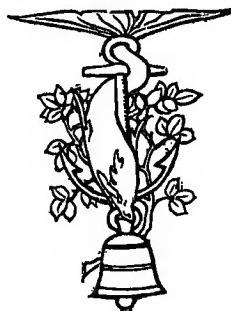
And a Third Volume is in preparation on
THE ENGLISH BISHOPS AND KINGS;
THE MEDIAEVAL MONKS, WITH
OTHER LATER SAINTS

LIVES AND LEGENDS OF THE GREAT HERMITS AND FATHERS OF THE CHURCH, WITH OTHER CONTEMPORARY SAINTS

BY

MRS. ARTHUR BELL

Author of 'Lives and Legends of the Evangelists, Apostles, and other Early Saints,' 'The Elementary History of Art,' 'Representative Painters of the Nineteenth Century,' etc.



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P R E F A C E

THE present volume deals with a deeply interesting period of the history alike of the Church and of Christian art, for between 300 and 700 A.D. a complete revolution took place in the attitude of the world towards Christianity; a revolution reflected in every branch of culture, but especially in literature, painting, sculpture, and architecture. During the fourth century many hundreds of martyrs were sacrificed to the blind fury of the heathen, with the result that more canonized saints belong to it than to any other period. In the seventh, on the other hand, when the death penalty was inflicted, it was generally by the Christians themselves as a punishment for heresy.

In the fourth century the art which was most thoroughly imbued with the Christian spirit was, strange to say, still strictly classic in form, for it was rather by the transubstantiation of heathen ideas than the introduction of new ones that the radical change taking place amongst all classes of the community was illustrated. The Christians, surrounded as they were on every side by enemies, had at first no time for the evolution of original art-forms, and gladly availed themselves of those already in use, selecting, of course, such as were best suited to bear a new and more spiritual significance.

Early Christian art was, indeed, until some time after the conversion of Constantine, practised solely for the sake of doing honour to the dead, and nearly all the examples of it which have been preserved to the present day, are the frescoes and sculptures of the catacombs and of some few sarcophagi from elsewhere. By the middle of the fourth century, however,

mosaics were very generally used for the decoration of the basilicas which then took the place of the underground churches, in which the Christians used to meet to worship in secret, and an entirely new class of subject, partly historical and partly legendary, came into vogue. This was the first stage in the evolution of Christian art properly so called, and from that time until the decadence set in after the golden age of painting and sculpture, there was practically no limit to the production of beautiful work, combining with greater or less technical skill, the expression of the deep reverence for their themes, characteristic of those who worked, not for earthly gain, but for pure love of art and religion.

When the masterpieces of mediæval art were produced their meaning was intelligible to all, for the lives and legends of the Saints were familiar even to the unlearned; but as time went on, and faith in the unseen grew dim, their significance became obscured, whilst the origin of the symbols introduced was more or less completely forgotten. With the new enthusiasm for art, which was one of the most marked characteristics of the nineteenth century, however, was associated a revival of interest in the subjects chosen for representation by the sculptors and painters of the past. On every side it became recognised that to understand the creations of such men as Giotto, Fra Angelico and their successors, or of the nameless sculptors who enriched the cathedrals of Europe with exquisite statues and bas-reliefs, caring nothing for individual fame, it is not enough to be a good judge, able to recognise the hand of this or that master, not enough to have a general knowledge of the history of the Church. The student must be as thoroughly in touch with the subjects treated as were the artists themselves; he must view their work from within, not from without, and if he cannot altogether share their faith in the reality of their visions, he must at least be able, with the aid of his imagination, to appreciate their attitude.

NANCY BELL.

SOUTHBORNE-ON-SEA,

July, 1902.

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THE SAINTS IN CHRISTIAN ART

A.D. 300—600

CHAPTER I

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN HERMITS

IT was in the latter part of the third century, when the Roman Empire was rapidly falling into decay, and internal dissensions were beginning to add to the difficulties of the early Church, that it became customary for converts to seek in the desert the quietness and peace they could no longer find in the haunts of men. The Christian hermits were, however, by no means the first to withdraw from the world with a view to leading a life of solitary meditation and prayer. The Essenes of Palestine, for instance, who had had so much to do with the development of Judaism as it existed in the time of our Lord, had already long practised a rigid asceticism, many of them living in absolute solitude, striving to keep their bodies pure by abstention from all earthly joys, and to bring their souls into touch with the Divine.

It has, indeed, been claimed by some writers on the history of the Church that St. John the Baptist, and even Christ Himself, belonged to the brotherhood of the Essenes, and there is no doubt that many of the customs of the early Christians, such as the holding of all property in common and the frequent meetings for worship, greatly resembled those of the Jewish sect.

Whether the Christian hermits borrowed the idea of solitary asceticism from the Essenes, or merely arrived at the same conclusions as their predecessors from similar causes, there is no doubt that many of them went to much greater lengths in

their self-discipline than did any of the Jewish recluses, for they were not content with mere abstention from pleasure : they inflicted the severest suffering upon themselves. They forgot that as the temples of the Holy Ghost, their bodies were worthy of all reverence, even from themselves, and they were in danger, moreover, of losing sight of the beautiful truth, that the highest life is not a struggle to win individual salvation, but an unceasing effort to obtain the greatest good for others. To be in the world, but not of it, was the ideal set by the Master before His disciples, and in His beautiful prayer for them before His Passion, He asked the Father, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil.

The first Christian hermit was a young man named Paul, a native of Thebes, who was born in the second half of the third century, and was left an orphan before he was sixteen. He is said to have been of noble descent, and to have been educated as a Christian. In any case, he was amongst those who fell under suspicion during the terrible persecution ordered by Decius, and after being hidden in Thebes for some time he succeeded in escaping to the desert, intending, probably, to remain there only until he could return home in safety. He chose as his retreat a cave near to which grew a fine palm-tree, sheltering a beautiful spring of clear water, and he soon became so enamoured of solitude that he resolved to spend the rest of his life in the charming spot.

As he left no record of how he spent his time, and he had dwelt alone for more than twenty years before he was discovered, it is impossible to give any real account of his life. According to a generally received tradition, he at first ate nothing but the fruit of his palm, and quenched his thirst with water from his spring, but later a raven brought him a loaf of bread every day, and the wild beasts of the desert used to gather about the entrance to his cave, forming a kind of guard. The leaves of the palm sewn together with fibres, served as garments to the saint, and from them also he wove a scourge with which to discipline himself.

St. Paul of Thebes might have ended his life amongst his dumb friends unknown to all his fellow-men, but for the fact that his existence was revealed in a dream to St. Antony of Alexandria, who, like himself, had left the world in early

youth to seek in solitude a closer communion with God. Born of Christian parents at Coma, a village near Heraclea, the young Antony was early left an orphan, but it was not until he had led a gay life for some years that he was converted at heart. Wealthy, talented, and of very pleasing appearance, he was much beloved in Alexandria, and great was the dismay of his companions, when he announced his intention of retiring to the desert, impelled to do so, it is said, by hearing the words read out in church : ' Go and sell all that thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven.' Unlike the young man to whom this advice was first addressed, St. Antony at once resolved to obey, and having first provided for his only sister, he gave away all his other possessions, retaining for himself nothing but the clothes he had on at the time and a pilgrim's staff.

According to one account, St. Antony joined a community of hermits, already living in a mountain not far from Coma, each in a separate cave, meeting only rarely for worship ; but the generally received opinion is that he was himself the founder of this community, the other members having gathered about him after he had lived alone for many years. However that may be, St. Antony, who is surnamed the Great, is always supposed to have been the true founder of monachism, the institution which was eventually to exercise so great an influence in the Church. He may justly be called the first Christian monk, as St. Paul of Thebes was the first Christian hermit or anchorite ; he is generally spoken of as St. Antony the Abbot, and it is impossible to overestimate the influence he exercised during his life-time, or the results of his work after his death.

Many are the quaint legends which have gathered about the memory of St. Antony, and from them a very clear idea may be obtained of the character of the young Egyptian. He had, it is true, renounced the world and all its pleasures, but it would appear that in his secret soul he still cherished a love of being first. He wished to be more fervent in prayer, more vigorous in fasting, more severe in self-discipline, than any of his fellow-hermits. In fact, though his pride in his earthly position was conquered, his spiritual pride still sorely needed humbling. For this reason the devil was permitted to harass the saint in many ways, and the silent solitude of his cell was often invaded by the emissaries of the Evil One, who whispered all

manner of wicked suggestions in his ear. Nor was this all : the supernatural power of these agents of the devil enabled them to tempt the recluse with actual visions of the good things he had left behind him. Now a table covered with delicate food was spread before him, now beautiful women hovered about him, urging him to enjoy life whilst he could ; but he repelled all their seductions with prayer, and in the end prevailed against them, though the struggle left him faint and exhausted. Then Satan tried less gentle means to win him from his allegiance to Christ, letting loose upon him horrible fiends in all manner of revolting human and animal forms, who scourged him, tore his flesh, and finally left him half dead upon the ground of his cave. Here he was found by one of the other hermits, who nursed him back to life, and to whom he told his terrible experiences.

It is further related that when the sufferer opened his eyes after his long swoon, the cell was filled with heavenly radiance, and he cried aloud, ‘Where wast Thou, my Lord and Master, in my suffering for Thee ? why wast Thou not with me to aid me in my conflict ?’ to which touching appeal the voice of Christ Himself replied, ‘Antony, I was with thee all the time ; I stood by thee and beheld thy combat, and because thou didst manfully overcome, I will be with thee to the end, and make thy name famous throughout the world.’

Greatly cheered and strengthened by this commendation, St. Antony resolved to strive yet harder to devote himself utterly to the service of the Lord. Bidding all his brother hermits farewell, he withdrew to an even more remote retreat, dwelling utterly alone in a cavern for no less than twenty years, during which he was fed miraculously, so that when at last he was discovered he was still a hale and hearty man, his long white beard alone testifying to his age. The place of his retirement once revealed, the saint found it impossible any longer to remain in seclusion, so great were the crowds who flocked to him for advice, and so many were those who wished to emulate his example. Reluctantly he consented to come down from his mountain, and in the year 305 he founded at Phainum, not far from Memphis, the first regular Monastery, consisting of a number of scattered cells in which the monks lived alone under a rule given to them by St. Antony. The holy man remained at Phainum until 311, when, a fresh perse-



Alinari photo]



[Accademia, Florence

ST. ANTONY THE GREAT AND ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST

By Fra Filippo Lippi

cution of the Christians having broken out, he went to Alexandria in the hope of winning the crown of martyrdom. Wearing the long white or gray robes he had chosen as the garb of his community, he appeared constantly in the streets, preaching to the people, and winning many new converts, but to his own great disappointment he was left unmolested. In 311 he returned to his Monastery, and a few years later founded a similar community on the banks of the Nile; but though he retained the chief control over both, he contented himself with occasional visits to them, spending the greater part of the rest of his life in his mountain retreat, where he was waited upon with the utmost devotion by two of his disciples, named Macarius and Amathas.

In his old age St. Antony was, it is said, once more assailed by the chief temptation of his youth, for the spiritual pride he imagined he had conquered so completely got the better of him again. For seventy-five years he had led a life of absolute self-denial, and in his secret heart he thought to himself, 'Surely in all the wide world there is none holier than I.' One night, however, as he slept on his hard bed, he seemed to hear a voice saying to him, 'There is one holier than thou, for Paul the hermit has served God in solitude and penance for ninety years.' This revelation was a great blow to the saint, but, with his usual courage, he quickly accepted the inevitable, and resolved to go at once to seek the man whom God Himself had thus commended.

Taking no one with him, and with nothing but his staff to help him on his arduous journey, St. Antony, in spite of his great age, set out to walk across the desert, trusting to heavenly guidance to direct his steps. Meeting by the way many wild creatures, including, according to the legend, a centaur and a satyr, who bowed down before him in reverence, he asked of them the way to the retreat of Paul, and thanks to their directions he reached the cave after three days' journey, recognising it at once by the palm-tree and the spring.

Thanking God for the guidance which had brought him safely to his goal, St. Antony knocked at the entrance to the cave and called to Paul to let him in. It was long, however, before he could get any response from the recluse, who for ninety years had exchanged no greeting with any human creature. When at last the stone forming the door of the retreat was

rolled away, and the two old men stood face to face, the emotion of both was very great, and after gazing on each other in silence for a few moments, they embraced as if they had been brothers, shedding tears of joy. His tongue once loosed, many were the eager questions asked by St. Paul of St. Antony, and great was his astonishment at the news he heard. It is said that the first inquiry of the older hermit was, ‘Are there still any left who do not believe in Christ?’ and St. Antony’s answer must have been a bitter disappointment to St. Paul, who had dreamt that the millennium had already come.

Talking earnestly together, the hermits were presently aroused to notice the flight of time by the arrival of St. Paul’s old friend the raven, who had brought with him a whole instead of half a loaf of bread, which he dropped at the feet of the two old men, an incident alluded to in the Breviary in the following words, put into the mouth of the hermit: ‘For sixty years I have daily received half a loaf; now at thy arrival Christ has doubled His gift to His soldiers.’

This fresh miracle convinced the older recluse that St. Antony had indeed been sent to him by the Master they both served, and after the simple meal was over he said to his guest: ‘My brother, God hath sent thee here to receive my last breath and bury me. Go back to thy dwelling, I pray thee, and fetch thence the cloak given to thee by the holy Bishop Athanasius: wrap me in it, and lay me in the earth.’

Surprised at the mention of this cloak, which had indeed been given to him by St. Athanasius many years before, but which he had spoken of to no one, and had never worn, St. Antony longed to question his friend further. Something, however, seemed to check his speech, and he therefore merely embraced St. Paul once more and set forth on his return journey. He arrived safely at his Monastery, fetched the cloak, without meeting any of the brethren, and hastened back, hoping to find St. Paul still alive; but at a distance of three days’ journey from the cave it was revealed to him that the end had come, for he heard beautiful music, and, looking up, he saw angels bearing the pure soul of the saint to heaven. When he reached the home of St. Paul, he found him kneeling, as if in prayer, but he was quite dead, and St. Antony knew not what to do, for old, feeble, and weary with his long journeys, he had no strength to dig a grave. Weeping bitterly, he



Anderson photo]

[*Appartamenti Borgia, Vatican, Rome*

THE MEETING BETWEEN ST. ANTONY AND ST. PAUL

By Pinturicchio

To face p. 6

cried : ' Oh that it might please God to let me die beside thee, oh my brother ! ' but as the sad words left his lips a noise outside the cave made him turn his head, and, lo ! two lions were preparing a grave in the ground with their paws. When it was ready, the faithful creatures drew back and waited reverently whilst St. Antony, having wrapped the body of St. Paul in the cloak he had brought from so far, laid the sacred burden in the grave. The lions then helped him to cover it over with sand, and the mourner, touched at their devotion, prayed for them, saying : ' O Lord, without whose divine protection no leaf can stir upon the tree, no little bird fall to the ground, bless these creatures who have thus honoured the dead according to their nature.'

An account of the visit of St. Antony to St. Paul and the strange funeral is given in a manuscript Breviary preserved in a nunnery at Amiens, in which occurs the following graphic description of the actual interment : ' The gentleman (St. Antony) had lions in his service, lions with whose help, instead of that of a hoe, he dug deep into the soil, where he sorrowfully buried the dead Paul.'

His melancholy task performed, St. Antony sadly returned to the Monastery, taking with him in exchange for the cloak he had used as a shroud, the tunic of palm-leaves St. Paul had worn so long. Having related all his experiences to his monks, he went back again to his lonely mountain cell, greatly humbled at heart, for he knew now that St. Paul had indeed been holier than he. Except for one short visit to Alexandria in 355, to reason with the Arians, who were greatly troubling the Church, St. Antony left his solitude no more until his death, which took place at the age of 105 years. Before the end he instructed the two disciples mentioned above to bury his body secretly, adding his conviction that in the day of the resurrection he would receive it again incorruptible from the hand of Christ. His only personal property, two sheepskins with the tunic of St. Paul, he bequeathed to St. Athanasius and Bishop Serapion, and with the touching words, ' Farewell, my children ; Antony is departing, and will be no longer with you,' he breathed his last.

The Abbot's instructions as to his interment were carefully followed, but his body is said to have been discovered in the sixth century, and to have been translated first to Alexandria,

then to Constantinople, and finally to Motte Saint Didier, in Dauphiné, where it is still greatly revered.

In spite of the revelation said to have been made by God Himself as to the superior claims to sanctity of St. Paul, the fame of the first hermit has been altogether overshadowed by that of St. Antony, probably because the work of the former ended with his life, whilst that of the latter is still even at this late day fruitful of results. Comparatively few appeal for aid in their distress to St. Paul, but many towns have chosen St. Antony as patron, and various classes of the community claim to be under his special protection. He is amongst the saints honoured at Naples, Paderborn, Hildesheim and Paris. The people of Munich are devoted to him because he is supposed to have aided Alfonso the Great in winning back their islands from the Moors in the ninth century, and the Hospitallers, amongst other religious societies, revere him as the founder of the first monastic institution.

On account of his own victory over the devil, St. Antony is credited with the power to exorcise evil spirits and also to be able to save his votaries from infectious diseases, for in the eleventh century, when the terrible epidemic, to which later the name of St. Antony's fire was given, was devastating Europe, many of those who prayed at his shrine escaped.

Keepers of pigs and pork-butchers invoke St. Antony, for a reason explained below; winnowers of wheat call upon his name, probably because he and the other hermits of Egypt were in the habit of weaving mats and baskets of straw; and grocers, notably those of the city of London, formerly known as Pepperers, chose the hermit as their patron, it has been suggested because many of their commodities came from the East.

The most constant attributes of St. Paul the Hermit in art are a raven and a loaf of bread. He is as a rule represented as very old and emaciated, with long white hair and a white beard, reaching nearly to his knees. His only clothing is a tunic or waistcloth of woven palm-leaves, and whether he appears alone beneath his tree in the desert, or with other saints in devotional pictures, he always seems to be completely lost to his surroundings in earnest meditation.

In the Turin Gallery is a very characteristic painting by Ribera of St. Paul, seated on a rock, with a skull beside him,



Alinari photo]

[San Bernardino, Bergamo

THE MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH ST. ANTONY AND OTHER SAINTS

By Lorenzo Lotto

To face p. 8

and a raven hovering above his head, whilst in the distance St. Antony is seen approaching; and in the Louvre, Paris, is another representation of him from the same great hand. In S. Agostino, Rome, is an Altar-piece by Guercino in which St. Paul the Hermit is on one side of St. Augustine, and St. John the Baptist on the other; Giotto in his fine 'Coronation of the Virgin' in S. Croce, Florence, has given the great recluse a place of honour beside St. Peter, and in the same subject by Girolamo da Santa Croce in S. Giuliano, Venice, he is grouped with Saints Florian and Giuliano.

The attributes given to St. Antony are numerous and exceptionally quaint. Chief amongst them is the pig or hog, with or without a bell round its neck, whose constant presence has been variously explained, some seeing in it the emblem of the vices of sensuality and gluttony over which St. Antony triumphed so successfully, whilst others look upon it merely as a type of the privileges enjoyed by the pigs of mediæval monasteries, who were allowed to run wild in towns and villages long after those of laymen had been deprived by law of their liberty. St. Antony was, as already mentioned, the patron Saint of the Hospitallers, who devoted themselves to the care of the sick and suffering, and when, owing to the many accidents which had occurred, including the death of a French Prince, who was thrown to the ground in a street of Paris through a hog having tripped up his horse, orders were given for the confiscation of wild porkers, an exception was made in favour of those of the Antonins, or nursing friars. To distinguish them from the common herd, these pigs had to wear a bell, and at the sound of the bell pious householders were in the habit of placing food outside their doors, a custom which gave rise to the popular proverb, 'to run from door to door like a pig of St. Antony,' applied to beggars and parasites, and the name of a Tantony, or St. Antony pig, being given to a very fine animal. At York it was long customary for the Master of the Hospital of St. Antony to keep one pig out of every litter born in the district.

A bell is also an emblem of St. Antony, in allusion to the power of the Saint to cast out evil spirits, who are said to hate the sound of consecrated bells. The passing-bell was rung in olden times, not merely as a call to all within hearing to pray for the departing soul, but also to scare away the devil, who

was supposed to be waiting in the hope of intercepting the spirit on its way to heaven. When the bell is worn by the pig in pictures of St. Antony, its meaning is, of course, that given above, but when it is placed in the hand of the Saint, suspended to his staff, or lying at his feet, it may be taken to bear the more spiritual signification.

In some old representations of St. Antony the Hermit he holds a scroll on which is written the words 'Quis evadet?' in allusion to a vision in which he saw the whole world in a large net held by the devil, and cried aloud 'Quis evadet?' or 'What will avail to save?' to which agonized question the answer 'Humilitas' was given from heaven. Sometimes flames are introduced at the side or beneath the feet of St. Antony, some suppose because of the Saint's aid against the disease called the fire of St. Antony, whilst others, with scant reason, see in it a reference to his ability to save from fire in this world and the next. In his right hand St. Antony generally holds an open book, and in his left a staff with a T-shaped handle, a symbol into which, as explained below, various meanings have been read, but which is probably merely indicative of the Saint's great age and the many journeys he performed on foot.

St. Antony generally wears the loose robes of a monk, and they are, as a rule, of a gray or brown colour, although his friend St. Athanasius says that he always wore white; but these simple garments are sometimes replaced by the ornate costume of a Prince of the Church, as in a painting by Baroccio in the Louvre, whilst, instead of the staff or crutch, the Bishop's crosier is placed in the right hand. However much such details as these may vary, one remarkable symbol is rarely absent in representations of the great founder of monachism. This is the letter T worked in blue or white on the shoulder or the hem of the outer robe, and many earnest discussions have been held as to its meaning, some asserting that it and the T-shaped handle of the staff of St. Antony were both memorials of a cross of similar form, in use as early as the time of the Pharaohs as a type of immortality, and adopted in the third century by the Christians of Alexandria as an emblem of their faith. To some few the T has a yet more spiritual significance, for it is taken to be the first letter of Theos, the Greek word for God, and to mark the fact that St. Antony

was one of the elect ; but if this were so the letter would have been stamped, not merely on the robes, but on the forehead of the Saint. Others again, including the learned Père Cahier, are of opinion that the much-discussed T merely represents the crutch, which in the middle ages became a kind of badge of the monastic profession, the first duty of monks having originally been to aid the crippled and infirm. In any case the first Abbot's name was given to all nursing friars, and near his shrine at Motte Saint Didier a great almshouse was founded, in the first instance to receive patients attacked by the disease called St. Antony's fire, but later open to all sufferers.

Whatever the original significance of the T, it eventually became so closely associated with St. Antony that it may be taken for granted that it has reference to him, even when introduced in connection with some other Saint, as on the reverse of a medal found in the Seine bearing the effigy of St. Claude of Besançon, the T in this case meaning merely that the brotherhood of St. Claude used to meet in a church named after the celebrated Hermit.

The various legends respecting the temptations to which St. Antony was subjected have led to the constant introduction at his feet of a demon, sometimes in the form of a man of hideous aspect, sometimes in that of a goat. Occasionally he is seen meeting the satyr or the centaur of whom he is said to have inquired the way when seeking St. Paul. In every case he appears as a man of noble presence, with a long white beard, and he has none of the emaciation from fasting which makes some of the representations of his friend St. Paul so painful. St. Athanasius who knew him well, said of St. Antony that, after thirty years of loneliness, 'he appeared not to others with a sullen or savage, but with a most obliging, sociable air,' and many artists seem to have had this description in their minds when they painted the great recluse. In old Greek pictures he is often represented giving the Benediction with an expression of great benevolence ; in the celebrated 'Heures d'Anne de Bretagne,' preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, he is seated in meditation, with flames at his feet ; in the beautiful panel by Marco Basaiti in the Venice Academy, his attitude is full of dignity ; and in the famous engraving by Albert Dürer he is represented seated outside the city of

Nuremberg, absorbed in a book, whilst beside him is a lofty double cross from which hangs the symbolic bell.

In Giovanni Battista's picture, now in the Venice Academy, of St. Joseph holding the Infant Christ on a pedestal, St. Antony the Hermit is grouped with Saints Anne, Antony of Padua and Peter of Alcantara; in the beautiful 'Madonna and Saints' by Paolo Veronese, in S. Francesco della Vigna, Venice, St. Antony is introduced opposite to St. Catherine, and his figure is considered remarkably fine; in one of Baldovinetti's most beautiful groups of Saints, now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, the Abbot is on the right of the Virgin, beside St. Lawrence; in Titian's celebrated 'Virgin with the Roses,' in the same gallery, he is the companion of the young St. John; and in the Florence Academy are two panels by Fra Filippo Lippi, evidently originally part of an important painting, in one of which is a very beautiful figure of St. Antony leaning on his T-handled crutch. There is also a fine profile head of the Hermit in the 'Christ bearing His Cross,' by Fra Bartolommeo, in the Florence Academy; and on the wall of a street in Prato, the birthplace of Filippino Lippi, there is a fresco by that master in which St. Antony is introduced.

The favourite subjects from the lives of the two first hermits are the Temptation of St. Antony, his Meeting with St. Paul, the Death and Burial of the latter, and the Funeral of St. Antony. In the celebrated frescoes by Pietro and Ambrogio Lorenzetti of Siena, in the Campo Santo, Pisa, six subjects are from the legend of Saints Paul and Antony. In one the two old men are meeting at the mouth of St. Paul's cave, both on their knees, St. Antony holding up his characteristic staff as if to show it to the older hermit; in the second scene St. Antony is preparing the body of his friend for interment; in the third the lions are digging the grave; in the fourth St. Antony lies prostrate outside his cell, submitting calmly to the scourging two demons in human shape are inflicting on him; in the fifth he is seen after he has won the victory, kneeling at the feet of Christ to receive His blessing; and in the sixth he is represented twice: seated quietly in his cell, apparently carving a spoon out of a piece of wood, and standing beside his Monastery, with his crutch in one hand and the other raised in benediction.

In painting and engraving the 'Temptation of St. Antony'



[*San Paolo, Verona*

THE MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS ANTONY AND MARY MAGDALENE

By Francesco Bonfignori

has been very variously rendered. Sometimes the evil one appears in the form of a beautiful woman trying in vain to interrupt the prayers of the Saint, but more often, as in the celebrated prints by Martin Schöngauer and Jacques Callot, demons of horribly grotesque form assail the victim, who is lifted bodily into the air by them, yet in spite of all his agony retains an expression of earnest devotion. The engraving by Schön-gauer is said to have so delighted Michael Angelo, on account of the virile force of the figures, that he copied it both in pen and ink and in colours, buying fish which had scales something like those of the demons to insure the greatest possible accuracy.

Ribera, to whose grim humour the subject forcibly appealed, represented St. Antony praying, with a woman ringing a bell close to his ears, and Salvator Rosa painted the Hermit lying on his back with a demon astride upon his chest. Teniers was so enamoured of the theme, that he painted it no less than ten times, varying the treatment slightly in every case; but all his pictures, of which one is in the Brussels Gallery, are painfully effective in their horrible realism. Annibale Carracci, in the fine composition in the National Gallery, London, struck a truer note, when he made the Saint so absorbed in the contemplation of a vision of Christ that he is blind to the demons on either side of him; and Tintoretto in the celebrated altarpiece in S. Trevaso, Venice, was content with suggestion only, introducing portraits of Venetian beauties amongst the fair women trying to entice the recluse back to earthly joys.

As a general rule the Meeting between the two hermits is represented as taking place without human witnesses, though angels look down from above. In a quaint painting by Brusasorci in the Brera Gallery, Milan, host and guest are dividing the loaf, seated on a rock, the raven is flying away, and Christ Himself with arms outstretched in benediction appears above, upheld by cherubs. Guido also in his fine painting, now in the Berlin Gallery, has two figures only, but Pinturicchio in the fresco in the Appartamenti Borgia of the Vatican has introduced three gaily-dressed women behind St. Antony and two monks behind St. Paul. The friends are, however, altogether unconscious of the presence of the intruders, behaving as if they were quite alone, and the women seem to be somewhat disconcerted at the meeting. From a projecting branch above the head of one of the monks, who leans on a T-handled staff, hangs the

bell of St. Antony, showing that he is the attendant of the guest, not of the host.

In the picture by Velasquez in the Prado Gallery, Madrid, painted for the Monastery of St. Antony at Buon Retiro, St. Antony is waiting for admission outside the cave of St. Paul, and in the same subject by Lucas van Leyden, in the Lichtenstein Gallery, Vienna, the bread has just been dropped by the raven, who is hopping away in the foreground.

Scenes from the life of St. Antony are amongst the much-defaced frescoes ascribed by some to Agnolo Gaddi, and by others to Gherardo Starnina, in S. Croce, Florence; in the Brera Gallery, Milan, is an interesting picture by Ludovico Caracci of the great Founder of Monachism instructing his monks; Bernardino Passeri and others have represented the Death of St. Paul and his Burial with the aid of the lions whilst angels look on, and Rubens has painted the Death of St. Antony in the presence of his mourning disciples, with a pig peeping out from beneath the bed.

St. Antony the Hermit was long greatly venerated in England, where many churches are dedicated to him, notably those of St. Antony in Meneage and St. Antony in Roseland, both in Cornwall. The former is said to have been erected as a thank-offering by some travellers who were saved from shipwreck by the intervention of the Saint in the thirteenth century. The now destroyed Church of St. Antholin in London, the name of which (a corruption of that of the hermit) is still retained in the parish to which it belonged, was also dedicated to him, and in the North of England several parishes still keep his memory green.

CHAPTER II

SOME CELEBRATED CONTEMPORARIES AND SUCCESSORS OF ST. ANTONY THE HERMIT

SCARCELY less celebrated amongst the hermits of Egypt than St. Antony was St. Pachomius of Thebes, who is sometimes represented in art receiving a book or roll of MS. from an angel, and with a serpent or a crocodile beside him, for he is said to have received the rule of the monastery founded by

him at Tabenna direct from heaven, to have been able to walk on venomous snakes unharmed, and to have been in the habit of riding across the Nile on a crocodile's back.

Even when fact is sorted from fiction, the story of St. Pachomius is a deeply interesting one, full of the quaint charm so characteristic of the early days of the Church, when God seemed specially near to those who sought Him in solitude and a direct response to prayer was no surprise to the faithful suppliant.

A soldier in the Roman army, the young Pachomius had been converted to Christianity at the age of twenty, and when his regiment was disbanded, on the fall of Maximianus, he resolved to retire altogether from the world. He went first to ask the advice of an old man named Palemon, who had long lived alone in the Theban desert, and had won a great reputation for holiness. Surprised that one so young and handsome as his visitor should wish to become a hermit, Palemon at first tried to dissuade him, painting the life in the very gloomiest colours, but Pachomius was not to be daunted, and in the end the kindly old man allowed him to share his cell.

The two remained happily together for some months, the novice becoming greatly attached to Palemon, waiting on him as if he had been his son, and endeavouring to tempt him to relax his self-discipline a little. Palemon, in his turn, was beginning to fear that all his efforts to give his heart wholly to God had been in vain, so much did he love his pupil, when an abrupt close was put to their intercourse. Pachomius was one day praying alone in the desert, as was his wont, and presently felt that some strange presence was near him. He looked up, and an angel stood beside him, who told him not to fear, but to listen to a Divine message. He was to leave his present abode and found a monastery on the banks of the Nile. According to some, the heavenly visitor gave the rules to be observed in the new community in writing to the astonished hermit, but others are content with asserting that he merely dictated them. In any case, when Pachomius related his vision to Palemon, the latter at once decided to go with his adopted son to Tabenna, the spot indicated by the angel, and there the two, with their own hands, built the first cell, which soon became the nucleus of a large community.

The work done, Palemon sadly bade his beloved pupil fare-

well, returning alone to his old home, where he soon afterwards died. Pachomius had not long to wait for further leading; first one of his brothers and then many young Egyptians joined him, each building for himself a small cell, and all working together at the large refectory in which they met for meals. The rule given by the angel was, it is said, exceedingly rigid: absolute silence was to be preserved, and all communications were to be made by signs. The dress consisted of a sleeveless white linen tunic, with a large cowl completely concealing the features, and a goat's skin to serve as mantle.

The Abbot enjoyed no special privileges beyond that of inflicting on himself a severer discipline than on any of his followers. It is related that when his own sister came to ask for an interview with him he sent back the stern reply that no woman could be allowed to cross his threshold, and that she must be content with knowing that her brother still lived. To this she meekly replied, that her only desire was to lead a life of religious meditation, and Pachomius, though deaf to the appeal of natural affection, at once ordered a cell to be built for her on the other side of the Nile, where in course of time she was joined by other holy women, who formed themselves into a community resembling that at Tabenna.

Before his death, at the early age of fifty-seven, St. Pachomius had founded no less than seven monasteries in the Theban desert, their inmates numbering more than six thousand. He was, in fact, the true founder of the monastic system, although that honour is generally given to St. Antony, for the recluses who joined the great hermit were bound by no special rules, and were free to return to the world, whereas the monks of the Order of St. Pachomius took upon themselves life-long vows of seclusion and celibacy.

St. Hilarion of Gaza, the first hermit of Palestine, was sent by his parents when very young to Alexandria to be educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, but he was converted to Christianity soon after his arrival, and went to visit St. Antony in his mountain retreat. The celebrated hermit took a great fancy to him, and would fain have kept him with him. This would not, however, have been consistent with the rigid self-denial he considered it his duty to practise, so he sent the young man away, advising him to return home and lead a solitary life in his native land.

On his arrival at Gaza, whither he went in obedience to the suggestion of St. Antony, the young Hilarion found that his parents were both dead and had left him all their wealth. This he divided amongst his relations and the poor, retaining nothing for himself, after which he withdrew to the desert, where he is said to have lived for twenty years quite alone. At the end of that time those afflicted with disease or possessed by evil spirits began to seek him out, for it is related that when patients from Syria went to consult St. Antony, he used to say to them, 'Why do you come so far to see me, when you have my son Hilarion close at hand?'

The first miracle of healing with which St. Hilarion was credited was the restoration to health of three children at Gaza, whose mother had induced him to come forth from his retreat to see them. Standing beside their bed, the holy man merely uttered the one word 'Jesus,' and they at once recovered, with the result, that on the return of St. Hilarion to his cell, he was so besieged by other applicants for relief that he could no longer lead the life of seclusion he had chosen. Many were the evil spirits he cast out, many the unholy spells he broke by his simple belief in the power of prayer; but the two most celebrated of his triumphs were the calming, by making three crosses in the sand, of a great storm on the coast of Dalmatia, and the destruction of a terrible dragon, which had devoured many men, women, and children, keeping the whole country in a state of terror. In the latter case the saintly man had a quantity of wood piled up, leaving a space in the centre, and then commanded the dragon to place himself within the fatal space. The poor creature meekly obeyed, the wood was set fire to, and the evil monster was quickly consumed.

Hearing of the death of St. Antony, St. Hilarion resolved to visit the place where the great recluse had died, hoping thus to get away from the crowds by whom he was now constantly surrounded. So great, however, was the opposition to his leaving Palestine, that he was at last compelled to consent to a compromise, and to take forty monks with him. With them he visited every spot made sacred by the presence of his revered predecessor, and then, resisting all the efforts of the hermits of Egypt to induce him to take the place of their lost leader, he returned alone to Palestine. Before leaving he told his attendant monks that they would be safer without him, an

excuse which turned out to be true, for no sooner had he left them than messengers arrived with orders from Julian the Apostate to slay St. Hilarion wherever he should be found. The rest of his life was one vain struggle for the seclusion he looked upon as essential to the true worship of God, for it is said that even if he succeeded in concealing his retreat from his friends, it was always known to those possessed of evil spirits through the uneasiness of their tormentors.

At last, in a wilderness near Paphos, on the island of Cyprus, death released the much-persecuted Saint from all importunities. He was not, however, allowed to expire alone, for many who had come to seek his aid were gathered about him. Almost with his last breath he entreated that he might be buried where he died, without pomp or ceremony, and in the hair-cloth shirt and cloak he was then wearing. His wishes were respected, but not many months afterwards his friend and disciple, Hesychius, secretly removed the body to Palestine, re-interring it in his own monastery near Majuma.

St. Hilarion is sometimes represented alone in prayer in the desert, or dying surrounded by his monks and patients; but more often, as in the celebrated fresco in the Campo Santo, Pisa, he appears vanquishing the dragon, who seems to be listening spell-bound to his exhortation, or is about to place himself amidst the flames at the command of the saint.

A good deal of confusion has arisen between two great hermits named Macarius, which signifies 'happy,' who both lived in the fourth century, and, though not related to each other, were for some little time associated in banishment. To distinguish them they are called the Elder and the Younger, although authorities differ greatly as to the date of the birth of both of them.

St. Macarius the Elder is generally represented praying or working in his cell, with a lantern hanging above his oratory, in token of his having withdrawn to a remote district to commune alone with God. He is said to have been a herdsman who left his flocks to take care of themselves, and retired with a few companions to the desert of Sceté when he was about twenty years old. There he grew in holiness, and became a very successful opponent of the devil, whom, according to tradition, he worsted in many a conflict. It is related that one of the disciples of St. Macarius the Elder, meeting a heathen priest



[Campo Santo, Pisa]

ST. HILARIUS VANQUISHING THE DRAGON

By Pietro Lorenzetti

hastening along as if he were running in the Bacchanalian festival, called out to him, ‘Where are you running to, demon?’ a question which so enraged the priest that he beat the inquirer nearly to death with a heavy stick. This incident being miraculously revealed to St. Macarius, he sought out the priest, and, instead of reproaching him, said to him in a gentle voice: ‘Good-day. You have been taking a great deal of trouble; you must be very tired.’ At a loss to understand what was meant the priest entered into conversation with the monk, who so touched his heart that he fell on his knees before the holy man, entreating his forgiveness, and promising to retire to the desert himself if only St. Macarius would receive him as a Christian convert. The hermit gladly consented, and the two went together to pick up the poor victim of the priest’s rage, and carried him to the retreat of St. Macarius, where he was tenderly nursed back to health. The priest was duly baptized, became a monk, and never again returned to the world.

On another occasion the devil is said to have appeared to St. Macarius in the form of an old man carrying with him a large number of phials. St. Macarius knew who he was at once, and asked him on what evil errand he was bound, to which the old man replied: ‘I am going round amongst the hermits of this desert with a potion for each. I shall give them their choice, so that if they do not fancy one they can have another. The Saint smiled, for he knew that no temptation was likely to shake the constancy of the men who had already won so many victories over evil, and he waited the return of his visitor without any misgivings. Presently the devil came back, and St. Macarius said to him, ‘Well, how did you get on?’ ‘Oh,’ was the reply, ‘they are all intractables, these monks of yours; not one of them would follow me.’ ‘What!’ cried St. Macarius in pretended sympathy, ‘have you not one friend?’ ‘Yes,’ said the devil, ‘I think I have one,’ and he mentioned the name of a young monk. ‘He pretends he doesn’t care for me, but I know he does, and believes in me too.’ Then St. Macarius resolved to go at once to the aid of the young monk, and by telling him of his own temptations, he won his confidence and strengthened him to resist the Evil One, who confessed later to the holy man that he had now lost his one friend, who shut the door in his face the last time he attempted to enter.

Except for a brief banishment with some other monks who

had fallen under the displeasure of Lucius, the Arian Bishop of Alexandria, St. Macarius the Elder lived for sixty years in his desert cell, having, it is said, won many hundreds to follow his example. Where he was buried is not known, nor has the site of the home in which he dwelt so long been identified.

St. Macarius the Younger is supposed to have been born in Alexandria, to have been the pupil of St. Pachomius, and to have dwelt in the Theban desert for seventy-two years. Scarcely anything is known of him except that he shared the exile of St. Macarius the Elder for a time, but many very significant legends have gathered about his name. It is related that he chose an old tomb as his retreat, and one day, finding a skull on the ground, he held a long conversation with it, an incident represented in the centre of the Campo Santo fresco, already referred to in connection with Saints Paul, Antony and Hilary.

St. Macarius began his chat with the skull by asking to whom it had belonged in life, receiving the answer, 'To a pagan.' 'Where, then,' said the hermit, 'is thy soul?' 'In hell,' was the startling answer. 'How deep?' asked the Saint. 'Deeper than the distance from heaven to earth.' 'Are there any deeper down in misery than thou art?' further inquired the holy man, and the skull said, 'Yes; the Jews are deeper still.' Then came the last question, 'Are there any deeper down than the Jews?' and the startling answer, 'Ay indeed; the Christians, whom Jesus Christ has redeemed, yet by their actions prove their want of belief in Him, are in a yet deeper depth.' How this extraordinary interview affected the inquirer is not told, but it probably caused him much heart-searching, lest haply he should himself share the doom of the faithless ones.

Another anecdote is to the effect that St. Macarius generally went about with a heavy load of sand upon his back, and when asked the reason he replied, 'I torment him who torments me,' meaning, possibly, that he strove by self-inflicted weariness to out-do the devil. Whatever its original signification, the sack of sand on the shoulder became, in course of time, the most distinctive characteristic of St. Macarius the Younger; but he also sometimes carries in his girdle, or suspended round his neck, a small calabash or phial, in allusion to the power over evil spirits with which he was credited, his mode of delivering his patients being to anoint them with the holy oil he always

carried with him for the purpose. Occasionally St. Macarius is seen surrounded with wild animals, in allusion to his friendship with them in the remote wilds of the desert, and the skin of a wolf is associated with him ; but this is the result of the misappropriation of a legend belonging rightly to his contemporary and friend, St. Mark, the so-called Wonder-worker of Egypt.

This St. Mark was, it is said, on the authority of St. Macarius the Younger, a man of such exceptional holiness that the Holy Communion was administered to him by angels, for which reason he is represented in some old Greek paintings with an angel beside him, or, more rarely, kneeling to receive the sacred elements, which are offered to him, by a hand issuing from the clouds above his head, in a kind of spoon, such as is still in use in the Eastern Church for administering the Sacrament to laymen.

Another pleasing legend related of St. Mark the Hermit is that he healed not only those of his fellow-creatures who came to him for aid, but also the wild animals of the desert. On one occasion a lioness brought her cub to him, and dropped it at his feet, looking into his face with eyes full of a yearning appeal for help. When St. Mark examined the little one, he found it was quite blind, and he gave it sight by calling on the holy name of Jesus. The mother gratefully licked the hands of the healer and went off happily, carrying her cub in her mouth, to return the next day, bringing the skin, some say of a ram, others of a hyena, as a reward for the service rendered to her, for which reason the skin of a wild animal is one of the attributes in art of St. Mark. The gift of the lioness is said to have been presented by St. Mark to St. Athanasius, and later passed on by him to St. Melania the Elder, a holy woman who founded a nunnery at Jerusalem at the latter end of the fourth century.

Another very celebrated hermit of Egypt was St. John, surnamed the Obedient, a man of humble birth, who had practised the trade of a carpenter for several years before he decided to abjure the world, and appears sometimes in art amongst the other early recluses, watering a barren tree or standing beside a mass of rock. He lived at first with an old recluse in the Theban desert, and there earned his nickname, for it is related that his master, who seems to have been a very

eccentric person, ordered him to water a dry stick he had stuck up in the ground twice daily, and to roll down to his cell a large rock which several hundred men could not have moved. Without a murmur at the absurd and useless tasks set him, St. John fetched water from a distance of two miles every day, to pour it over the stick, and spent many hours toiling in vain at the rock, to the surprise and admiration of those who came to consult his tyrannical master.

At the end of twelve years the old man died, and St. John, set free at last from his voluntary bondage, withdrew to the top of a lofty hill, where he dwelt alone in a walled-up cell, spending five days of the week in solitary meditation and prayer, but devoting the other two to the aid of those who came to him for advice, amongst whom was the Emperor Theodosius. St. John used to speak to his visitors through a little window, and is said to have wrought many wonderful miracles of healing. As time went on and his fame increased, he allowed some of his disciples to build a small hospital near his retreat for the use of patients from a distance; but he never relaxed the severity of his self-discipline, and died at the age of ninety, without having once come down from his lofty retreat.

Yet another celebrated hermit of the fourth century was St. Arsenius, who is introduced in the great Campo Santo fresco at Pisa plaiting a basket of rushes, and is sometimes represented, for a reason explained below, seated with crossed legs reading a book.

The son of Roman parents of high rank, who had brought him up as a Christian, Arsenius early decided to dedicate his life to God, and he had just been ordained deacon, when the Emperor Theodosius appointed him tutor to his sons. After trying in vain to escape from accepting a position for which he did not consider himself fitted, Arsenius resigned himself to the inevitable, and soon obtained such a good influence over his pupils, that it was not until he had been at Court for eleven years that he felt free to leave. One night, however, when he had been praying earnestly for guidance, he is said to have heard a voice from heaven, saying: 'Arsenius, flee the company of men, and thou shalt be saved.' Accepting these words as a command, he fled from the palace the next day, and, taking ship for Alexandria, made his way thence to the desert of Sceté, already the home of so many holy men.

Greatly annoyed at the disappearance of the man he had learnt to look upon as a friend, the Emperor made strenuous efforts to discover his retreat, and having at last done so, he offered him large sums of money to be devoted to the foundation of monasteries, if he would return to Rome. It was, however, all in vain : St. Arsenius was not to be persuaded, and, after more than forty years of seclusion, he died at the age of ninety-five at Memphis, where he had taken refuge when the desert of Sceté was invaded by a horde of barbarians.

Many quaint stories are told illustrative of the humility which seems to have been the chief characteristic of St. Arsenius. He began his life in the desert by presenting himself, as was customary, before the chief hermits already settled there, to ask their permission to become one of them. He was told to appear that same evening at the general repast, and was left standing unnoticed until the meal was nearly over, when one of the brethren threw a piece of bread at his feet, telling him to take it or leave it, as he pleased. The only reply made by Arsenius to this rough speech was to sit down on the ground and quietly eat the piece of bread.

The new recluse retained, it is said, several habits he had acquired at Court, and used sometimes to sit cross-legged when he was reading, though this could scarcely have been a custom at Rome. To rebuke what he considered an attitude unfitting for an anchorite, the Abbot of the community assumed the same posture one night at supper. St. Arsenius took the hint, and never offended again. When Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, honoured St. Arsenius by coming to visit him with several nobles of the city, the holy man naïvely asked them if they would promise to follow his counsel, and when they eagerly replied that they would, he merely told them to spare themselves the trouble of coming after the worthless Arsenius again. Later, when a Roman lady travelled all the way from her native city to see him, and waited outside his cell till he came forth for the evening meal, the hermit reproved her so sternly for seeking one so unworthy as he, that she dared not raise her eyes from the ground, but only begged him in a trembling voice to pray for her. To this St. Arsenius replied, with scant courtesy, that he would ask God to efface the remembrance of her entirely from his memory.

On the approach of death, the great humility of the Saint

made him fear that even now he might be shut out from heaven, and the brethren who were ministering to him asked him if he were afraid to die, to which he replied that he was indeed, adding that the dread had been ever present with him in all the long years of his sojourn in the desert ; a remarkable confession, showing that the holy man did indeed count himself as less than the least in the sight of God. Guessing that the hermits would probably give him a grand funeral, and that, when he could no longer prevent it, undue honour would be paid to him, he made them solemnly promise just before the end, that they would drag his body to the top of the mountain on which he died, and leave it there to be devoured by wild beasts. He was reluctantly obeyed, and every trace of his remains was lost, but his memory is still cherished as that of one who was consistent to the last.

With St. Arsenius may be ranked St. Ephrem of Edessa, one of the earliest of the so-called Fathers of the Greek Church, who, although not a hermit in the strictest sense of the term, for he only withdrew to the desert at intervals, yet led a life of the strictest self-denial, even when in the world. Born of Christian parents at the town after which he is named, at the beginning of the fourth century, he was dedicated in his infancy to God, but was not actually baptized until he was eighteen years old. Endowed with great intellectual gifts, St. Ephrem himself wrote an account of his early life in what he called his Confessions or Reprehensions, in which he relates several anecdotes illustrative of his self-will as a boy. One day, he says, he was sent into the country by his parents, and seeing a cow grazing by the wayside, he stoned her to death. Meeting her owner a little later, he added a lie to his other sin, declaring he had not seen the cow.

A few months after this the boy was again sent on some errand into the fields near his home, and, making friends with a shepherd, he remained all night with him and his flock. The shepherd, having had too much to drink, fell asleep, wolves came and devoured some of the sheep, and Ephrem, being found by their owner with the careless guardian, was thrown into prison as an accomplice in his crime.

Whilst awaiting his trial, Ephrem was, he says, three times visited by an angel, whose heavenly counsels affected him so deeply that, when after seventy days' confinement he was

released, his character was completely changed. His one desire was now to serve God, and as soon as he had been baptized he withdrew to a desert in Mesopotamia to join a small community of monks established there. He remained there for some years, and, as he himself relates, divided his time between prayer and making sails, which were sold for the benefit of the poor. Of a naturally hot temper, he so entirely subdued it that he became known as the meek, or the peaceable man of God, and he shed so many tears on account of his sins that St. Gregory of Nyassa said of him, 'To weep seemed almost as natural for him as it is for other men to breathe.'

St. Ephrem is said to have seen God face to face in his desert retreat, and to have received orders direct from Him to return to Edessa, to do work awaiting him there. He obeyed, and very soon became famous as a preacher and teacher, confirming waverers, convincing doubters, and winning many hundreds of new followers for Christ. His sermons and homilies are amongst the greatest treasures of the Greek Church, and are full of eloquent advice suitable for every age. When he felt death approaching, he called his disciples about him and said to them: 'Sing no funeral hymns at Ephrem's burial, suffer no eulogiums to be pronounced, wrap not my dead body in any costly shroud, erect no monument to my memory. Allow me only the portion and place of a pilgrim, for I am a pilgrim and a stranger, as all my fathers were on earth.' Hearing as he lay dying that a lady asked to see him to make a last request, St. Ephrem admitted her, and when, falling on her knees beside his bed, she entreated to be allowed to provide a coffin for him, he consented, stipulating, however, that it should be a very mean one. He then, in his turn, made his visitor promise that she would henceforth renounce all the pomps and vanities of the world, and soon afterwards he breathed his last.

Greek artists represented St. Ephrem of Edessa as a man in the prime of life, with a long beard and tears flowing down his cheeks. He wears the simple monastic habit in use at his time, the cowl, which is worn over the forehead, bearing a small cross, and he uplifts one hand with an eloquent gesture, as if he were preaching. In a quaint old picture which has been severally times engraved, called 'The Obsequies of St. Ephrem,' he is seen lying on his bier with his weeping disciples around him,

and in the background are various anchorites doing penance, reading or conversing in their cells, St. Simeon Stylites, with scant regard for chronology, appearing on his pillar in their midst, although he was not born until many years after the death of St. Ephrem.

CHAPTER III

OTHER GREAT HERMITS AND CONVERTS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

AMONGST other fourth-century hermits who, although they are not very frequently represented in art, became widely known for their sanctity, and about whose memories many beautiful legends full of spiritual meaning have gathered, were St. Onuphrius; St. Paphnutius, with whose name that of St. Thais is inseparably connected; St. Abraham, who won his niece St. Mary from an evil life; St. Zosimus, who was with St. Mary of Egypt when she died; and St. Julian the Hospitable, who, although a married man, became a recluse late in life.

St. Onuphrius, or S. Onofrio, as he is called in Italy, where he is much honoured, the monastery near Rome in which Tasso died being named after him, is said to have been a Prince of Abyssinia who was taken prisoner by some of the nomads of the desert, and became so enamoured of their quiet life that, when they released him, he joined one of the monastic communities in the Theban desert. Later he yearned for even greater solitude, and withdrew to a remote cave, where he lived, for sixty years, without seeing a fellow-creature, sustained only by bread and water brought to him by an angel. At the end of that time he was discovered by St. Paphnutius, who at first took him for a wild beast, so uncouth was his appearance, with his long hair and beard forming his only covering, but for a belt of twisted leaves about his loins. When he realized that the strange creature was indeed a man like himself, St. Paphnutius was filled with awe and reverence, for he knew that this must be one who had

achieved great holiness. Falling on his knees at the feet of St. Onuphrius, he asked him to bless him, and, his request having been granted the two exchanged experiences.

St. Onuphrius told his visitor how he had resolved to live and die alone, but had been cheered in his solitude by the frequent visits of an angel. He added that, as St. Paphuntius had been allowed to find him, it was evident that he had been sent by God to bury him. He begged him, therefore, to give him the Holy Communion before the end, and having partaken of the sacred elements, he peacefully breathed his last. St. Paphuntius, with the aid, it is said, of two lions, dug a grave, and having laid his friend in it, he started for home, resolved if possible to emulate the example of the departed Saint, by yet greater self-denial than he had hitherto practised.

It is related that before he died St. Onuphrius urged St. Paphuntius not to loiter by the way on his return to his own cell, for that if he did some signal judgment would befall him. In spite of this warning, however, the traveller halted to rest in a deserted cell, and whilst there he was sorely tempted by a beautiful woman, who tried to cheer his loneliness. St. Paphuntius turned his back on her, and, to divert his mind from her attractions, thrust his hands into a fire he had lit to warm himself, and the woman at once fell down dead. The prayers of the hermit restored her to life, and she entreated him to forgive her, promising if he would give her his blessing to forsake her evil ways. The holy man granted her request, and she left him once more alone in his cell, but an earthquake destroyed it and a fine palm-tree growing beside it. Rescued from all these dangers, St. Paphuntius got safely back at last to his own retreat in the remote districts of the Theban desert. There he lived alone for many years, ever growing in holiness, but much troubled with the very human longing to know how he was progressing in his spiritual life. He often prayed to God to reveal to him if he had succeeded in pleasing Him, and one night an angel is said to have appeared to him in a dream, to tell him that in a certain town some distance off lived a strolling player who was more highly thought of in heaven than himself.

When he awoke, St. Paphuntius hastened to seek the musician, and found him pursuing his calling in the streets, with a crowd about him listening to his singing. The hermit

looked at him in astonishment, for there was nothing at all remarkable in his appearance, and his wonder became still greater when he learned from the man's own lips that he had been a great sinner, but was now penitent. St. Paphuntius explained the reasons for his questions, and the musician seemed much touched at what he heard. The two eagerly discussed together what could be the meaning of the angel's words, and came to the conclusion that what had won so great a commendation from on high, must be the fact that the player gave all his earnings to the poor and had rescued many a despairing debtor from prison.

With the naïve simplicity which was his most noteworthy characteristic, St. Paphuntius entreated his new friend to return with him to the desert, and the musician consented, although by so doing he was putting an end to his powers of usefulness. The two lived in separate cells, meeting but rarely, and St. Paphuntius continued his efforts to achieve the greatest holiness possible to man. Presently he again entreated God to reveal to him what progress he was making, and again an angel appeared to answer his prayer. This time the suppliant was told that a rich man living in a town still further off than that where the musician had been found was higher in favour with the Almighty than himself.

Bitterly disappointed, St. Paphuntius set forth without delay to find his new rival, and having identified his house, a very magnificent one, he rang the bell and begged for admission. He was courteously received, and taken at once into the presence of the master, who entreated his blessing, insisted on washing his feet, and made him sit in a place of honour by his side. The hermit then explained the reason of his visit, and his host, who could scarcely believe his ears, was altogether at a loss to understand in what his own holiness consisted. True, he gave much away to those in want, but, then, he had great wealth, and did not suffer at all from his generosity.

After a very long discussion, St. Paphuntius persuaded the rich man to distribute all he had to the poor and to join him in the desert. Yet another cell was built for him, and all went well in the little community of three, until the old desire to know his own position once more assailed St. Paphuntius. Greater than ever was his astonishment when

the angel, who a third time appeared to him, told him that a beautiful sinner named Thais, who had drawn into her net many of the young nobles of Alexandria, was more precious in the sight of God than he. St. Paphuntius resolved to go and see her, but, aware that a man in the dress of a hermit would not be likely to gain admittance, he arrayed himself in costly garments, hired a grand carriage, and drove up to her door, as if he were a suitor for her favour. He was ushered into her presence, and found himself amongst a crowd of her admirers. She was so beautiful, and there was such a child-like charm about her, that it was all the holy man could do to steel his heart against her. He pretended at first that he had only come to see her on account of her beauty, but when, after a good deal of hesitation, she granted him a private interview, he told her the whole truth, and asked her if she could herself explain the revelation of the angel.

The astonishment of the young girl can be imagined. Was it indeed possible, she cried, that she, a sinner, was of value to God? Oh, why had she not known it before? Was it too late for her to turn to Him? Touched by her emotion, and forgetting his own original motive for seeking an interview with her, St. Paphuntius assured her that it was never too late to appeal to the All-merciful, who had sent His only Son to die for sinners. Weeping bitterly, the poor girl entreated to be told how best to atone for the past, declaring she would do anything if only she might win forgiveness. Then St. Paphuntius, who had but one piece of advice for everyone, told her she must give away all her ill-gotten gains, and henceforth live alone, spending all her time in prayer. She agreed at once, and when she had deprived herself of everything but a few coarse garments, the relentless hermit took her to a nunnery in the wilderness, and there she was walled up in a cell, with only a little opening left through which her food could be given to her.

Before St. Paphuntius left her to this terrible life of lonely penance, Thais asked him to teach her how to pray, and he told her to repeat constantly the brief petition : 'Qui plasmati me, miserere mei' (Thou who didst create me, have pity on me). For three long years the girl who had had all Alexandria at her feet remained shut out from all human sympathy; but it is related that at the end of that time St. Paphuntius, who had

never forgotten her, asked St. Antony if he did not think she had now suffered enough. The great Founder of Monachism at once summoned a council of hermits, and to one amongst them, known as Paul the Simple, it was revealed in a vision that Thais was forgiven. He had, he reported, seen three angels guarding a beautiful bed, and a voice had told him it was reserved for Thais the Penitent. St. Paphuntius was chosen to take the good news to the sufferer, but when her cell was opened, and she was told she was free to leave it, she replied that she had learnt to love it now, and would be content to die in it. She was, however, at last persuaded to leave it, but she died a few days afterwards in the convent to which she was taken.

Opinions are divided as to the manner of death of St. Paphuntius himself. According to some, he died peacefully in the monastery he had founded, which before the end came numbered several hundred inmates. Others assert that when the fierce persecution under Diocletian broke out the holy man left the seclusion of the desert to preach the Gospel in Egypt and encourage the martyrs, himself falling a victim to the fury of the heathen, by whom he was crucified on a palm-tree, as represented in the Greek Menology and elsewhere.

Saints Onuphrius and Paphuntius are generally grouped together amongst the hermits, but the former is sometimes represented alone, as a very old man of emaciated appearance, with hair and beard of immense length, wearing a garment of palm leaves, and holding a staff in one hand, whilst in the other is a rosary, although he is scarcely likely to have owned that aid to devotion. Occasionally, in allusion probably to his supposed royal birth, a crown and sceptre are lying at his feet.

In the Campo Santo fresco at Pisa the burial of St. Onuphrius by St. Paphuntius with the aid of the lions, the destruction of the cell by the earthquake, the visit from the beautiful woman, her death and her repentance after her restoration to life, are graphically rendered. Very realistic also is a drawing in a manuscript translation into French of the 'Golden Legend' preserved in one of the libraries of Paris, representing the meeting between the hermit and the musician, the latter holding a kind of hurdy-gurdy with five strings. The conversion of St. Thais and her arrival with St. Paphuntius opposite the cell in which she is to pass the rest of her life are the subjects of various quaint engravings in old collections of legends, in which

the penitent wears the dress of a nun, but is without the scroll bearing the words of her prayer, 'Qui plasmati me, miserere mei,' which is her usual characteristic.

The legend of St. Abraham and his niece Mary greatly resembles that of St. Paphuntius and Thais. St. Abraham had, it is said, lived alone for many years in a desert of Syria, when he learnt that the daughter of a brother who had recently died was leading an evil life in a neighbouring town. He therefore disguised himself in the uniform of an officer of the army and went to visit her. He was received by Mary without any suspicion as to his real character, and when they were alone together he told her who he was, entreating her to repent for the sake of her immortal soul. After he had pleaded long with her, he succeeded in touching her heart, and she consented to return with him to the desert, having first burnt all her finery.

According to another account, the little Mary had been confided to St. Abraham's care when she was only seven years old, and had lived near him in a cell of her own for thirteen years, seeing no one but her guardian, and spending all her time in prayer. She had grown up to be very lovely, and her lonely life had been a very poor preparation for resisting the sudden temptation which overtook her when she was twenty years old. A young hermit had come to consult her uncle in some difficulty, and had peeped through the window of Mary's cell. The sight of the girl kneeling, with her beautiful eyes upraised in rapt devotion, astonished him. He spoke to her, and she, suspecting no evil, answered him frankly.

This was the beginning of a romance which had a terribly tragic ending. The young hermit, forgetting all his vows, came again and again, nominally to see St. Abraham, but really to court his niece. Mary learnt to love him, and finally ran away with him. A brief time of guilty happiness was succeeded by terrible remorse. Either she left her lover or he deserted her; in any case, she presently found herself utterly alone in the wilderness, and, falling on her face, she lay moaning in her despair, crying that for her there was no hope left; shame must henceforth be her only portion.

Meanwhile St. Abraham, who appears to have been singularly blind to what had been going on, was greatly grieved at the loss of the girl committed to his charge, and prayed daily to

God to restore her to him. On two successive nights he dreamt that he saw a dragon devouring a white dove, and each time he rescued the bird by treading on the head of the evil beast. He then held the wounded dove tenderly against his breast; it revived and flew up to heaven, where it was received out of his sight.

Feeling sure that these dreams were an answer to his prayers, and that the bird typified the soul of the lost one, the old man set forth to seek her, and after wandering about for many days he found her almost at the point of death. He raised her from the ground, told her he knew and forgave all, even as God would forgive if she truly turned to Him again with her whole heart. St. Abraham then led her back to her cell, where she lived for several years after the death of her uncle. The fame of her sanctity spread far and wide, so that many flocked to her for advice, and she healed them all from their diseases, whether physical or mental.

Saints Abraham and Mary are generally represented in two cells side by side. Their return home is the subject of a fine old engraving, wrongly attributed to Albert Dürer, and still very popular in Germany, in which the old man is seen leading an ass, on which the penitent girl is seated, hiding her face in her hands. In two of his landscapes Philippe de Champagne introduced scenes from the legend of St. Mary: in one the visit of the young hermit to her is shown, whilst in the other she is back in her cell after her sad experiences, and crowds of pilgrims are bringing patients on litters to seek her advice.

Little is really known of St. Zosimus, and it is probable that but for the accident of his discovery of St. Mary the Egyptian he would have been almost forgotten. He had, it is said, been Abbot of one monastery in Palestine for forty-three years, when he received instructions in a dream to seek another home beyond the Jordan. He obeyed, and in the course of his wanderings he suddenly came upon a strange figure which he at first took for some holy hermit, but on nearer approach found to be a woman. Some say her long hair completely covered her, so that she needed no other garment, others that her white hair was cut short, and that she cried to the intruder, 'Abbot Zosimus, throw me your mantle to cover me before you come nearer.' Surprised that his name was

known to one he had never seen before, the holy man did as he was requested; the woman wrapped herself in the garment, and, coming near to him, told him that his coming had been miraculously foretold to her. He begged her to explain her presence in the desert, and with some reluctance she told him her sad story. She had, she said, lived an evil life for seventeen years, and had been brought to repentance by a remarkable occurrence. Hearing that a number of pilgrims were on their way to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross of Christ, she decided to go too, not with any idea of worship, but for the sake of the change and excitement.

Arrived at the Holy City, Mary went with the rest of the crowds to the church where the ceremony was to take place, but when she tried to enter it she found herself unable to do so. She returned again and again to the porch, but whenever she attempted to cross its threshold some invisible power held her back. Convinced at last that the cause of her difficulty was her own sin, she smote upon her breast and earnestly besought forgiveness. No answer came at first, but, looking up, the penitent woman saw an image of the Blessed Virgin, who seemed to look at her with eyes of yearning love. Beseeching the Holy Mother of God to intercede for her, she prayed yet more fervently, promising to sin no more if she might only be allowed to enter the sacred building. This time her petition was heard: she found herself able to go into the church, and, prostrating herself before the Holy Cross, she vowed henceforth to lead a life of lonely penitence in the desert. As she was about to rise, she heard a voice bidding her go beyond the Jordan, for there she would find rest and comfort, and she started at once on the journey, lingering in Jerusalem only long enough to return thanks before the shrine of the Blessed Virgin, to whom she felt she owed her forgiveness, and to buy three loaves of bread. This, she added, was forty-seven years ago, and since then she had exchanged no word with any human creature, and had lived entirely on the three loaves she had brought with her, supplemented by the few wild berries to be found in the wilderness.

When her story was told, St. Zosimus asked her what she wished him to do; and she begged him to leave her now, keep silence for a year, and then return to give her the Holy Communion before her death, which she knew would take place in

another two years. St. Zosimus was to bring the sacred elements to the further side of the Jordan on Holy Thursday, and there await her coming. He promised to do as she asked, and when he had prayed with her, he resumed his interrupted journey, full of wonder at all that he had heard and seen.

A year later St. Zosimus returned to keep his appointment with St. Mary, and arrived on the banks of the Jordan, he there awaited her coming. The river was at that time in full flood, and St. Zosimus wondered greatly how the penitent would cross it, but he waited patiently for some hours, and just as night was falling he saw her approaching from the other side. Without a moment's pause she walked across the river as if it had been dry land, and, falling on her knees before the holy man, she begged him to hear her confession. He did so, and when she had received the Holy Communion with the deepest reverence, she bade him farewell, telling him to come at the same time the following year to the spot where he had first met her, to bury her body, which he would find awaiting him.

St. Zosimus, who was now an old man, doubted much whether he would survive St. Mary, but she would not listen to any doubts on that point, and he promised if he were still alive to do as she requested. The next year he duly kept his appointment, and found the Saint lying dead on the ground, her features wearing an expression of deep peace and her hands folded across her breast. Beside her in the sand was written, 'Oh Father Zosimus, bury the body of the poor sinner Mary of Egypt! give earth to earth and dust to dust for Christ's sake.'

The holy man, who had not had the forethought to bring a spade with him, was looking about for something with which to dig a grave, when a lion came out of a little wood hard by and proceeded to do the work with his paws. He then helped St. Zosimus to bury the body, remained looking on whilst the holy man repeated the burial service, and then quietly withdrew. St. Zosimus returned to his convent and told the monks of the wonders he had seen. Before his death he wrote down full particulars of his interviews with St. Mary, who was henceforth greatly venerated in the Church.

St. Mary of Egypt, is sometimes associated in art with an image of the Blessed Virgin, in allusion to the cause of her

conversion, and occasionally, as on the seal of the Recollet Monastery at Dunkirk, of which she is patron, she is represented holding three loaves of bread in her hand, in memory of those she took with her to the desert. Now and then the penitent of Egypt appears in devotional pictures, as in an engraving by Israel von Meckenem opposite to St. Mary Magdalene, her lean, emaciated figure and careworn face contrasting forcibly with the youthful beauty of her namesake.

In one of the rooms of Il Bargello, originally a chapel, and later a prison, now the Museo Nationale of Florence, are some much-defaced frescoes of the lives of Saints Mary of Egypt and Mary Magdalene, and in the Church of S. Pietro al Po Cremona, where some of the relics of St. Mary of Egypt are said to be preserved, is a painting by the little known Malosso, representing the Saint in all her worldly finery, trying in vain to enter the church at Jerusalem. The first meeting between St. Mary and the hermit is the subject of a celebrated picture by Ribera, in which she appears as an old woman with short white hair, clothed in rags, and in another work from the same great hand, she is seen crossing the Jordan with the aid of angels, whilst St. Zosimus awaits her coming on his knees.

The modern frescoes of the Church of St. Merri in Paris include four scenes from the life of St. Mary the Egyptian, and her legend is very constantly introduced in stained-glass windows, especially in France. In those of the Cathedrals of Chartres and Bourges the meeting between St. Zosimus and the penitent, with her burial with the aid of the lion, are very graphically rendered, and in the Cathedral of Auxerre is a large window, of which, unfortunately, six medallions are missing, which when uninjured, told the whole story from the conversion at Jerusalem and the buying of the loaves, to the carrying of the soul of the Saint to heaven by angels. Of the remaining scenes the central medallion and that above are specially interesting. In the former St. Mary receives the Communion standing, and a hand issuing from a cloud above the head of St. Zosimus is pointing at her. In the latter the lion, who stands on his hind-legs, holds the head of the dead Saint tenderly and reverently against his shoulder, as he aids St. Zosimus to place the body in the grave.

The story of St. Julian the Hospitable, who is still greatly honoured in Italy and France, is more like a Homeric than a

Christian legend, and its hero has been likened, not without reason, to the Greek Oedipus, driven as he was by irresistible fate to commit crimes altogether hostile to his own nature.

The nationality of St. Julian is unknown, but he is supposed to have been of noble birth, and to have been living happily with his parents, to whom he was devoted, when a strange incident occurred, which led him to leave home and become a wanderer on the face of the earth. One day, when he was hunting a stag in the forest near his father's castle, the poor creature suddenly turned to him and said, in a voice like that of a man: 'Why dost thou, who art to be the murderer of thine own father and mother, seek to kill me also?'

Astonished and terrified, Julian begged the stag to explain the meaning of this awful prophecy, but the animal merely bounded away, leaving him to solve the mystery as best he could. Never for a moment doubting that the revelation made to him was a genuine and supernatural one, the young man did not dare to return home, but went forth alone to seek his fortunes far away, hoping thus to elude his terrible fate. In course of time he arrived in a country whose King, a noble and generous Prince, took a great fancy to him, and gave him an important post at Court. St. Julian served his master faithfully, married a beautiful woman named Basilassa, and in his new life gradually forgot the danger which threatened him. Fate was not, however, to be thus eluded; his broken-hearted parents, who had sought him far and near, in their turn came to the town in which he was, and asked for shelter at his house during his temporary absence. With the ready hospitality of the time, Basilassa received them kindly, questioned them as to the reason for their journey, and to her delight discovered that her husband was their son.

After a good meal the happy parents were taken by Basilassa, who could not do them honour enough, to her own apartments, which she placed at their disposal, herself withdrawing to a small room in another part of the castle. Early the next morning she went, as was her custom, to church, full of happy thoughts of the pleasant surprise awaiting her husband on his return, and little dreaming of the tragedy which had even then taken place.

During the night St. Julian had returned unexpectedly, and, going straight to the room he generally shared with his wife,

expecting to find her alone, he was astonished to see a bearded man in his own place. In the dim light he failed to notice that the woman beside the stranger was not Basilassa, and in his jealous rage he drew his sword and slew both the sleepers. With his hands still stained with blood, and despair in his heart, the murderer was rushing out of his desecrated home, when he met his wife returning from her devotions. She came eagerly forward to tell him the good news of the arrival of his parents, but he started back, crying in a voice of anguish, 'Who, then, was the woman in thy bed?' When he heard the truth, the unhappy man wept bitterly, and told Basilassa that he was no longer worthy to be her husband, for that God had evidently forsaken him. She tried to comfort him, and now for the first time learnt the reason of his flight from home. True woman that she was, the awful truth only bound her the more closely to the victim of fate. When St. Julian said he would release her from her vows and go forth to a life of penance alone, she refused to forsake him, and the two departed together from their home, leaving behind them all their wealth.

After many days' wandering the travellers came to a great river, where many had perished miserably in trying to cross over to the other side. They were seeking for a ford, when it was revealed to St. Julian that God willed he should remain where he was, to aid those who were in peril, and he therefore built two huts, one for himself and one for Basilassa. Later he added to these shelters a larger one for poor travellers, and for many years he and his wife spent all their time ministering to the needs of pilgrims, St. Julian ferrying, without fee, all who wished to cross over the river, and Basilassa tending those who needed nursing and care in the hospital.

One terrible night, when so great a storm was raging that St. Julian had felt sure his services would not be needed, he heard a voice calling to him from the other side of the swollen river, and without a moment's hesitation he launched his boat to obey the summons. Having got safely across, he found a young man awaiting him who was in a terribly loathsome state from leprosy, and was apparently almost dying of exhaustion. Nothing daunted, St. Julian carried him to the ferry-boat, and, having with great difficulty made the passage, laid him on his own bed.

The wounds of the sufferer were tenderly dressed by Basilassa, and the devoted husband and wife watched beside him till the morning. When daylight came, they were surprised to see that their patient appeared to be perfectly restored to health, and as they watched him a glory shone round about him, dazzling their eyes, and convincing them that some great marvel was taking place. Then the leper, whose face was now as that of an angel, said to Julian: 'The Lord hath sent me to tell thee that thy penance is accepted and thy rest is at hand.' The next moment the heavenly visitant, who some say was Christ Himself, disappeared, and a few days afterwards St. Julian and his wife passed peacefully away, thanking God for all His mercies.

In a Spanish version of this touching story, the fatality by which the family of St. Julian was so relentlessly pursued is to some extent explained as the result of the sins of his parents, who eloped with each other in early youth. The little Julian was their illegitimate child, and he was but fifteen when the terrible prophecy drove him from home. Lope de Vega's tragedy '*El animal profeta*' is founded on the St. Julian legend, but it does not include the leper incident.

St. Julian, who is much honoured in Italy as San Giuliano Ospitale, and in France as St. Julien l'Hospitalier or Julien le Pauvre, is the patron Saint of travellers, ferrymen, and boatmen, and is also appealed to for aid by the thatchers of Liége—why it is difficult to understand—and by jugglers, strolling players—hence the mask sometimes introduced at his feet—musicians, quack doctors, and shepherds, probably because they all wander about a good deal in the exercise of their professions. Travellers in difficulties say a paternoster in honour of St. Julian, and in olden times there were many wayside hospices, where the mention of the Saint's name was enough to secure to the wanderer food and shelter for three days and nights. Indeed, there is still, or was until quite recently, such a shelter at Antwerp.

St. Julian is generally represented in art as a handsome young man, sometimes in the ornate costume of a mediæval courtier, but more often in the simple robe of a hermit. He holds a hunting-horn, boat or oar in one hand, and a stag is often introduced beside him, whilst in the background is seen a river with a ferry-boat, to distinguish him from St.

Hubert, whose attributes are similiar to his. The whole story of his chequered career is graphically told in many stained-glass windows in French churches, notably in one in the Cathedral of Chartres, and in another in that of Rouen, the latter presented by the bateliers of that town in the fourteenth century.

In the quaint old church of St. Julien le Pauvre in Paris, there used to be an interesting bas-relief, representing the husband and wife crossing the water with Jesus Christ Himself, whom they have mistaken for a leper; in the Pitti Gallery, Florence, there is a fine composition by Allori, called the 'Hospitality of St. Julian,' in which the hermit, a man in the prime of life, with a long beard, is supporting the fainting leper in his arms, whilst in the distance St. Basilissa is holding up a light to guide some pilgrims to the riverside hospice; and in the Brussels Gallery is a painting of doubtful authorship of the Ascension to heaven in a blaze of glory of the supposed leper, with Saints Julian and Basilissa prostrating themselves on the ground in wondering awe. In England some few churches are dedicated to St. Julian the Hospitable, including one at Southampton, originally founded in the thirteenth century by twin brothers named Gervasius and Protasius after the well-known martyrs; and another at Wellow in Somerset, containing a modern stained-glass window representing the Saint as a ferryman, his oar in his hand.

CHAPTER IV

MARTYRED CHURCHMEN OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

GREAT as had been the rage of the heathen against the Christians in the third century, it became even more intense in the first part of the fourth, and until the conversion of Constantine at last gave peace to the long-suffering Church, the number of martyrs who gladly laid down their lives rather than deny their Lord was daily on the increase. It is ever darkest before the dawn, and even after the issue of the Edict of Milan, granting civil rights and liberty of conscience to the Christians

throughout the Empire, death was often inflicted in outlying districts by those in authority, who had not yet accepted the principles of toleration. True, many, as has been seen in the preceding chapters of this volume, withdrew to the desert, where they were able to serve God in their own way unmolested, but to leave their posts was impossible to the greater number of the Christians, and it was the clergy, true vicars of their flocks, who bore the brunt of the persecution under Diocletian.

One of the first to suffer in the fourth century was St. Erasmus, called by the Italians S. Elmo, and by the French St. Elme, about whom next to nothing is really known, though many quaint and touching legends have gathered about his memory. He is supposed to have been a Bishop, though of what see is not stated, and after long years of work for his flock, to have withdrawn to the solitudes of Mount Lebanon, where he was miraculously fed by a raven. According to another version of his legend, he was imprisoned somewhere in Palestine for his zeal in preaching the faith, and rescued by the Archangel Michael, who suddenly appeared to him, saying: 'Arise, Erasmus, and follow me, for thou shalt yet convert many to Christ!' The Bishop of course obeyed, and was taken by his guide to the coast, where the two embarked and sailed to the coast of Campania. There they landed and the angel left Erasmus, telling him to resume his work as a teacher. The Bishop, after fulfilling the prophecy that he should convert many, was arrested by order of Diocletian at Formia, now Mola di Gaeta, and subjected to terrible tortures, which he bore with unflinching courage. He was, it is said, put into red-hot armour, flung into a caldron of molten lead, pitch, and resin, and cut open, after which, with revolting refinement of cruelty, his entrails were wound by his executioners upon a kind of wheel. For the last detail there seems, however, to be absolutely no foundation in fact, and the capstan-like implement, with its coil of rope, generally associated with St. Erasmus, which is, as a rule, explained by reference to the manner of his death, is by the latest authorities supposed to be merely an allusion to his being the patron of sailors.

St. Erasmus is one of the fourteen auxiliary Saints specially honoured in Germany, but in the various missals in which his legend is related, there is no allusion to the horrible

martyrdom he is said to have suffered, though the incident of the raven is usually introduced. In the silk-producing districts of France the martyred Bishop is invoked by those suffering from colic or other ailments of the stomach, and it is customary for children to offer him skeins of silk on his fête-day, probably because the wooden winder used by the weavers resembles the implement associated with him.

St. Erasmus is generally represented, as in the Chronicle of Nuremberg, wearing the mitre and robes of a Bishop, with his staff in one hand and his capstan or windlass in the other. An angel sometimes stands beside or behind him and a raven is on the ground at his feet. Pictures or sculptures of his martyrdom are rare, but in an old stained-glass window in the Church of St. Botolph, Lullingstone, he is seen lying on the ground beneath a windlass, on to which his entrails are being wound, and above the altar dedicated to him in St. Peter's, Rome, is a fine mosaic rendering of the final scene of his martyrdom, after a design by Nicholas Poussin. There was also at one time a statue of St. Erasmus in St. Martin's Church, Canterbury, where it was placed opposite to one of St. Christopher.

Another celebrated Bishop who suffered martyrdom early in the fourth century was St. Januarius, some say of Naples, others of Benevento, who, after many years of fruitful work, was arrested and thrown into prison at Pozzuolo, whence he was dragged without trial to the amphitheatre of that city to be devoured by wild beasts. They, however, refused to harm him, and he was therefore condemned to be beheaded. It is related that, as he was being led to execution, he was asked by an old man to give him something to remember him by, to which he replied that he had nothing left but a handkerchief, and that he needed to bind his eyes with. Seeing the old man's disappointment, he then added, 'But you shall have it when I am gone.' After the head of the martyr was struck off, the executioner said in a mocking voice, as he tore off the handkerchief and flung it on the ground, 'How about your promise?' On his return to the town, however, the scoffer met the old man again, and, lo! he held in his hand the very blood-stained handkerchief which had been left at the place of execution.

The body of St. Januarius was taken to Naples and repre-

rently buried there. It was later removed, first to Benevento, and then to Monte Vergine, but it now rests in a beautiful shrine beneath the high altar of the Cathedral of Naples, which is dedicated to the saint. The head and two phials containing some of the martyr's blood are preserved apart from the rest of the remains, in the Cappella del Tesoro. The blood is said to become liquid at certain times, and a great festival is held in honour of the Saint at Naples on these occasions, when the blood is carried in an ornate shrine round the city.

The distinctive attributes of St. Januarius in art are two phials containing globules of blood, either held in his hand or placed at his feet. The Cappella del Tesoro in the Cathedral of Naples owns in addition to a fine fourteenth-century bust of the martyr, and a silver relief depicting the return of the body of the Saint to Naples after its temporary absence, several paintings on copper and frescoes by Domenichino, Guido Reni and Lanfranco, representing the martyrdom of St. Januarius, the miracle of the raising of a young man from the dead said to have been performed by him, with various wonders wrought at his shrine. In the Cappella del Capece Galeota in the same cathedral is a fifteenth-century painting, in which St. Januarius is on one side of Christ and St. Athanasius on the other; and in the quaint old seventh-century Church of S. Restituta is a very ancient mosaic of the Virgin, with St. Januarius on one side and St. Restituta on the other, whilst on one of the walls is a bas-relief, which originally formed part of an altar-screen, in which the figure of St. Januarius with his phials is introduced.

St. Blaise, a very popular Saint in England, France and Germany, who is generally placed side by side with St. Erasmus amongst the auxiliary Saints, was Bishop of Sebaste, and was driven by the persecution under Diocletian, to flee to a lonely mountain for safety. There he is said to have lived unmolested for some years, visited in secret by numbers of his flock, and beloved by all the wild animals, who used to come from far and near to gather about his cave, outside which they waited patiently every morning until he dismissed them with his blessing. The discovery of his retreat by the Roman authorities was due to an accident. The supply of wild beasts for the games in the amphitheatre was running short, and the

Governor of Sebaste sent hunters to make up the deficiency. These hunters found the holy Bishop sitting outside his cave, with a crowd of lions, tigers, and other animals, including such timid creatures as deer, gathered about him, apparently listening reverently to what he was saying. Presently one or another of his dumb friends came close up to him to have some wound attended to, and the hunters looked on in ever-increasing astonishment. Their surprise did not, however, prevent them from taking the holy man prisoner, for when the animals had dispersed St. Blaise was dragged back to Sebaste to be tried. On his way thither he met a poor woman who was going to the Bishop's cave to seek help for her boy, who had swallowed a fish-bone. Seeing the prisoner amongst his captors, she flung herself at his feet, crying, 'Oh, servant of Christ, have mercy upon me!' and St. Blaise touched the throat of the sufferer, who was at once cured. A little later another woman appealed to the Bishop for help: a wolf had carried off her pig, and was even then disappearing with it in the distance. St. Blaise at once called to the wolf to restore the stolen prey, and he was obeyed; the hunters feeling more and more that he whom they had captured was of greater value than any previous quarry. On their arrival at Sebaste, they told the Governor all that had happened, but he, instead of being convinced of the holiness of St. Blaise, looked upon him as a magician, and determined to destroy him. He ordered him to be first scourged, and then to have his flesh torn with an iron comb; but nothing shook the constancy of the martyr, and after enduring many other tortures he was finally beheaded; a number of Christian women wiping up his blood after his death.

The characteristics of St. Blaise in art are numerous, and some of them difficult of explanation. Generally, as on a leaden medal found in the Seine, now in the Cluny Museum, in which he is grouped with St. Louis of France, he holds what looks like a rake in one hand. More rarely he has two candles, or, as in a quaint old drawing preserved at Aix-la-Chapelle, he has a rolled candle in his left hand, this emblem being supposed to refer to his having said to a woman who brought him food and light in his cave: 'Offer a candle to your church every year in memory of me, and all shall be well'

with you and yours.' Sometimes, as in the coinage of Ragusa, of which city St. Blaise is patron, he holds a church in his hand, and in certain old calendars his fête-day, February 3, is marked with a horn, in allusion, probably, to his familiarity with wild animals, though he never hunted them. For many years it was the custom in the British Isles to light huge bonfires, called blazes after St. Blaise, on February 3, and it was supposed that even the wild animals celebrated the occasion by flocking forth to look at the flames. St. Blaise is invoked by all who suffer from diseases of the throat, and on the eve of his fête-day two candles are in certain districts blessed by the priest, who touches with them the throats of all who come to him for the purpose, saying: 'By the prayers and merits of St. Blaise, may God deliver thee from all sufferings in the throat.' It is related of St. Francis that he used this formula when patients came to him to be healed of throat diseases, and that he was annoyed when the cure was attributed to his own powers.

St. Blaise is the patron Saint of weavers and wool-carders, because of the resemblance of the combs they use to one of the instruments of torture associated with him, and he is specially honoured in Yorkshire, where he is credited with having invented wool-combing. He is also invoked by hewers of stone, perhaps because his iron comb was not altogether unlike a chisel. He is the protector of all in danger from wild beasts, and, on account of the incident related above, is supposed to take a great interest in pigs. He is often represented, as in some windows at Chartres, with wild animals gathered about him, or he is seen ordering a wolf to give up a pig, or touching the throat of a child.

The beloved Bishop appears sometimes in devotional pictures with his emblems beside him, as in a beautiful 'Madonna and Child' by a pupil of Pinturicchio in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, in which he is opposite to St. Bartholomew. There is a fine painting of his martyrdom by Carlo Maratta in S. Maria in Carignano at Genoa, and the same subject has been painted by the little-known artist Monsignori of Verona.

Three other martyred Bishops of the third century, who, however, suffered after the Christian religion had become that of the State, were St. Gaudenzio of Rimini, whose effigy appears in the early coinage of that city, but of whom little is known

beyond the fact that he was stoned to death by the Arian heretics, St. Donato of Arezzo, who is greatly venerated in Belgium as well as in Italy, and St. Ansano of Siena.

St. Donato is said to have been of noble Roman birth, and to have been brought up with the Emperor Julian, who, as is well known, renounced the Christian faith before his accession to the throne, although he did not avow his apostasy until he had reigned for some years. Having lost his father, and finding Rome no longer a safe place for Christians, St. Donato fled to Arezzo, where in course of time he became Bishop, winning a great reputation for sanctity, healing the sick by his prayers, and even sometimes raising the dead. Amongst the miracles said to have been performed by him, was the rescue of a tax-gatherer falsely suspected of making away with the public funds. The supposed thief appealed to the Bishop, explaining to him that he had given the money to his wife, who had buried it in a secret place, but had died without telling him where to find it. St. Donato at once went to the tomb with the widower, and, after praying earnestly for help from on high, called to the dead woman to tell him where the treasure was concealed; she replied immediately, and the money was recovered.

On another occasion, when the Bishop was administering the Holy Communion, the chalice he held in his hand was broken by some heathen who were bent on disturbing the service; but the holy man, not one whit dismayed, prayed that the sacrilegious deed might be neutralized, and the cup was mended at once, not a drop of the wine having been spilt.

The great influence acquired by St. Donato over the people of Arezzo aroused the jealousy of the heathen authorities, and although nominally toleration of all religions was still the policy of the State, the Bishop was arrested with a companion named Hilarion, and both were condemned to death, the former to be beaten with clubs till life was extinct, the latter to be beheaded. The bodies were buried together where the Cathedral of Arezzo now stands, the high altar of which is adorned with fine sculptures by Giovanni da Pisano, representing scenes from the life of St. Donato, whilst on the walls are pictures by different masters of similar subjects, including the martyrdom.

The chief characteristic of St. Donato in art is a chalice

held in one hand, and he appears with it on certain ancient coins of Arezzo, but he also sometimes holds a sword, the symbol of his martyrdom. He is introduced in a celebrated picture by Jan van Eyck, now in the Museum of Bruges, in which he stands on one side of the Mother and Child, and St. George on the other; in a 'Madonna and Saints' by Luca Signorelli in the Arezzo Gallery, he is in a place of honour opposite St. Stephen, and Jacques Callot has painted him reading in a cave, to which he used to retire for meditation.

The legend of St. Ansano of Siena greatly resembles that of St. Erasmus, for he is said to have been tortured to death, after a vain attempt to burn him, by having his heart and entrails cut out, for which reason he is sometimes represented holding a bleeding heart in his hand. More often, as in a beautiful painting by Sodoma, now in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena, and in a group of sculpture in the Cathedral of the same city, the patron Saint is seen baptizing his converts. The general opinion is that he was beheaded for his zeal in propagating the Christian faith.

With the Bishops who in the fourth century laid down their lives for the faith may be named the priest St. Lucien of Antioch, who suffered in 303, of whom it is related that, when left in prison to die of starvation because he would not deny his Lord, he begged on the eve of his death enough bread for a farewell administration of the Sacrament to his friends. His request was granted, and having no altar on which to place the sacred food, he used his own breast, thus exercising at once the office of priest and victim. He died the next day, and his body was thrown into the sea with a stone round the neck; but a friendly dolphin is said to have taken it to the shores of Bithynia, where it was reverently interred by the Christians of that district. On account of these two details of his legend, St. Lucien is represented in art, consecrating the bread as described above, or with a dolphin beside him. He is sometimes confounded with St. Lucien of Beauvais, who was beheaded a year or two before the death of his namesake, and is one of the Saints represented holding their own heads in their hands.

Another early martyr of the fourth century was the fellow-townsman of St. Lucien, St. Cyprian of Antioch, who, on account of his name being the same as that of the celebrated



[Arezzo Gallery]

MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH ST. DONATO, ST. NICHOLAS, AND
OTHER SAINTS

By Luca Signorelli

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Bishop of Carthage, rarely receives the honour really due to him. St. Cyprian of Antioch was a famous magician to whom resorted many lovers who wished to secure the return of their affections. Amongst his clients was a young heathen of noble birth who was attached to a beautiful maiden named Justina. She, being a Christian, rejected all her suitors, declaring her intention to dedicate her life to God. The magician tried all the usual spells in vain, and was at last, it is related, informed by the devil himself that even he could do nothing against those who put their trust in the God of the Christians. This was indeed a revelation to Cyprian, who determined to inquire further about the God whose power was greater than that of the Prince of Evil. He therefore attended several Christian services, and was in the end converted to the true faith. According to some, he became first a priest and then Bishop of Antioch ; whilst others speak of him as a layman only. In any case, it seems certain that he was martyred, and it is supposed that he suffered at the same time as St. Justina, with whom he is generally associated, both having been beheaded at Damascus, after being scourged and torn with iron hooks. Their relics are said to be preserved in S. Giovanni in Laterano at Rome, and they are sometimes introduced amongst other martyred Saints in sacred pictures, St. Cyprian with the devil fleeing from him, and with a sword in his hand ; St. Justina holding a little cross, in allusion to her victory over temptation through her faith in the Crucified, or she is reading and holds a lily, the symbol of purity, in one hand. Sometimes Saints Cyprian and Justina are grouped with a third figure, that of St. Theoctistus, a convert to Christianity, who, having come to the place of execution to bid farewell to St. Cyprian, was compelled to share his fate.

Examples occur of the association of a unicorn with St. Justina, as in a painting attributed to Giorgione in the possession of Herr von Kauffmann at Berlin. This emblem, which has greatly puzzled the students of Christian symbolism, is now generally supposed to typify indomitable strength of will, especially that of a young girl, who, sustained by faith, is able to overcome all her trials.

Worthy, in spite of his humble position in the Church, to take rank in the noble army of martyrs with such men as Bishops Blaise, Gaudenzio and Donato, was the young deacon

Vincent of Saragossa, surnamed the Invincible, who in the time of the terrible persecution under Diocletian, distinguished himself by the zeal with which he ministered to the suffering Christians. He was only twenty years old when he was arrested with Valerius, the aged Bishop of Saragossa, and taken before the Proconsul, Dacian, who excelled all the agents of the Emperor in his love of cruelty.

It is related that when Valerius answered the questions put to him in the low, trembling voice of old age, the young Vincent burst out with the words: 'How is this, my father? canst thou not speak aloud and defy this heathen dog? Speak, that all the world may hear, or suffer me, who am only thy servant, to speak in thy stead.' The Bishop gave him leave, and the young man then poured forth a perfect torrent of eloquence, declaring himself ready, nay, eager, to suffer all things for the cause of Christ. Dacian was only too glad to take him at his word; the old Bishop was merely banished from Saragossa, but Vincent was subjected to all the tortures it was still the custom in Spain to inflict upon apostates from heathenism. His body was torn with iron implements, he was half roasted on a large gridiron above a slow fire, and then, bleeding and blistered, was taken back to prison, where he was laid on the ground upon broken glass and pottery. Angels, however, came and ministered to him, and Dacian, fearing that his victim would after all pass away with his spirit unbroken, sent orders that his friends should be allowed to visit him, in the hope that they might save his life for further sufferings. His wounds were bound up, and he was laid upon a soft bed strewn with roses, but it was too late: he died with a smile of triumph on his lips, and his soul was taken up to heaven by angels, in the presence of those who were left to mourn his loss.

By order of the Proconsul the body of St. Vincent was flung into a marsh outside the city, to be devoured by wild beasts; but, adds the legend, a raven came and protected it from injury, driving off all who approached it. It was then sewn up in a sack and taken out to sea, where it was flung overboard with a millstone attached to it, but when the sailors got back to land, the body was found lying on the beach in perfect preservation. There it was left, and the friendly waves soon accomplished what man had failed to do,



Alinari photo

[*Palazzo Pubblico, Siena*

ST. ANSANO

By Sodoma

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burying it beneath the sand, as they do all things left to their ministrations. Many years afterwards the sacred remains were discovered by some Christians, who took them to Valencia, where they were re-interred with all due reverence. In the eighth century, when the Moors drove the Christians out of Spain, the latter took the body of the young martyr with them, and being driven by contrary winds on to the promontory now known as Cape St. Vincent, they buried it there. Here it is said the grave was guarded by numerous ravens, who kept watch over it day and night, their devotion being commemorated in the name of El Monte de las Cuervas, given to the place by the Spanish. In the twelfth century Alonzo I. of Portugal had the relics removed to Lisbon, where they found a final resting-place in the cathedral. A pair of ravens accompanied the ship in which the body was taken down the coast ; the birds were looked upon as sacred, no one was allowed to molest them, and their numerous descendants have ever since been fed by the Chapter of Lisbon, to whom a yearly allowance is given for their support.

The attributes of St. Vincent are as numerous as were his sufferings in life and the vicissitudes of his body after death. An angel is constantly introduced beside him; he often holds a small boat or a millstone in his hands, both in allusion to the unsuccessful attempt to sink his remains at sea ; and he sometimes has a gridiron at his feet, but as this is the universally accepted emblem of St. Lawrence, it is generally supplemented by other instruments of torture, such as iron hooks, etc. A raven is, however, his most persistent symbol; now and then it is perched on a millstone, or it is driving off a wolf which is trying to attack the dead body of the Saint. The coat-of-arms of Lisbon consists of a boat on a stormy sea, with the figure of St. Vincent on its mainmast, and two ravens, one on the prow, the other on the poop. The vinedressers of the South of France have chosen the young martyr as their patron, probably because the first syllable of his name means wine ; and he is sometimes represented, as in a leaden medal found in the Seine, holding a pruning knife in his hand, or he has a vat beside him and is surrounded with the foliage of the vine. The sailors of Spain and Portugal appeal to St. Vincent for aid in storms, and he is supposed to be able to recover lost property for his votaries.

Few Saints are more popular on the Continent of Europe than St. Vincent, whose name is met with at every turn in Spain and Portugal. He is the patron not only of Valencia, Saragossa and Lisbon, but of Chalons and Saone and other French towns, of Berne, Magdeburg, and Milan. The well-known church of St. Germain des Près in Paris was originally dedicated to him, for, according to an unfounded tradition, part of his relics were once deposited there, a mistake explaining the occasional association in certain pictures, as in one by Vien in the Louvre, of St. Germain of Auxerre with the young deacon.

Scenes from the legend of St. Vincent are of constant occurrence in the stained-glass windows of France, of which those in the Cathedrals of Chartres and Bourges and the Church of St. Vincent at Rouen are amongst the most interesting. In them the martyr is seen in his deacon's robes standing beside Bishop Valerius before the Proconsul; bound to his gridiron, or being torn with iron implements; lying in prison with angels attending on him, and dying on a bed of roses.

Strange to say, paintings of incidents of the career of St. Vincent are rare, probably because of the similarity of his legend to that of St. Lawrence; but there is a fine altar-piece by Carpaccio, in which the young deacon is the principal figure, in the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo at Venice, and in the predella beneath are scenes from his life. He is also introduced in many devotional pictures, notably in one by Pietro Pollajuolo in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, in which he is on one side of St. James the Elder, and St. Eustace on the other. There is a sculptured figure of the young deacon in Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster, and he is also introduced above the southern porch of the Cathedral of Chartres.

A more or less apocryphal Bishop of the fourth century was St. Narcissus of Girona in Catalonia, who is said to have evangelized the whole of that province, to have slain a dragon which had devoured all who attempted to draw water at a certain spring, and to have been in the end assassinated in his own church when saying Mass. St. Narcissus, who for some unexplained reason is greatly honoured at Augsburg, is sometimes represented holding a bunch of narcissi in his hand, in allusion, of course, to his name. Spanish artists have shown a great predilection for a remarkable incident said to have occurred at his tomb in 1286, when, in response to the prayers

of his votaries, a great swarm of venomous flies revenged the sacrilege committed by the soldiers of Charles of Valois in the churches of Girona. In certain old engravings the flies are seen issuing from the effigy of the Saint, who is represented as a beardless young man wearing the Bishop's mitre and robes, with his feet resting on the hilt of a sword, the supposed instrument of his martyrdom.

CHAPTER V

MARTYRED CITIZENS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

AMONGST martyrs of the fourth century who held no definite rank in the Church on earth, yet have been admitted into the great hierarchy of martyrs, few are more celebrated than St. Alban, who was the first to lay down his life for the truth in the British Isles, and is almost as much venerated in France as in England, St. Germanus of Auxerre having, it is said, taken part of his relics to Paris in the fifth century.

The main facts of the life of St. Alban are well authenticated, and even for some of the quaint legends related of him there seems to have been some slight foundation in fact. Born at Verulam, close to the site of the town now named after him, he was of noble Saxon birth, and skilled in all the learning of the heathen. The Christian religion had, as is now generally believed, been introduced into Britain as early as the second century, but, fortunately, the island was too distant from Rome to share in the persecutions to which so many fell victims elsewhere in the early days of the Church. The close of the third century was, however, marked by a great increase of zeal against the Christians, and the Imperial edicts concerning them began to be put into force even in the most remote districts.

One day a young priest named Amphiphalus, fleeing from those sent to arrest him, took refuge in the house of St. Alban, who hid and sheltered him for several weeks, during which the host was converted by his guest, the two becoming close friends. Presently the place of concealment of the fugitive was discovered, and Roman soldiers came to take him prisoner, but St. Alban changed clothes with him, and was

dragged before the magistrate in his stead, wearing the long priestly garment called a *caracalla*. When the deception was discovered, the indignation of the accusers was very great, and St. Alban was told that he must prove that he did not share his friend's apostasy by betraying his hiding-place and sacrificing to the gods, or he would himself be put to death. To this the gallant young Briton replied that he was a Christian, a worshipper of the one true and living God, the Creator of all things, adding that the sacrifices offered by the heathen were really made to devils, who could give no aid to their worshippers. Every effort to make him retract was in vain, and he was condemned to be first scourged and then beheaded outside the city.

The excitement caused by this sentence was intense and wide-spread, for St. Alban was greatly beloved in Verulam, and an immense multitude flocked out of the city to see him die. It is related that the crowds were so great that the bridge over the river became blocked, so that the soldiers with their prisoner could not pass it, but St. Alban, kneeling down on the bank, prayed that a passage might be provided. The waters at once parted, so that all could pass over dry-shod, and the executioner, who was walking beside his intended victim, was so astonished at the miracle that he flung his sword at St. Alban's feet, declaring he could not use it against one so evidently under the protection of God, and begging to be allowed to die in his stead. The new convert was dragged away by the soldiers, and another executioner was chosen, but he, too, was very reluctant to perform his office. Just before the end a second wonder was performed, for St. Alban prayed aloud that some sign might be given of the truth of the religion for which he was about to die. Immediately a spring of pure water gushed forth at his feet, and having drunk from it, he told the executioner he was ready, bending his head for the blow. With trembling hands the man did his duty, but directly the martyr was dead he, too, declared himself a Christian, and was in his turn beheaded with the soldier who had refused to kill the Saint. According to one version of the legend, the eyes of the executioner fell out as his sword descended upon the neck of the saintly victim, but for this gruesome detail there seems to be absolutely no foundation.

St. Alban is supposed to have been buried where he fell, and

some historians, including Bede, speak of a noble church marking the scene of his sufferings, but all trace of it had disappeared when the place where the bones of the martyr were interred was revealed in a dream to King Offa of Mercia. The King caused a search to be made, and the remains were found inclosed in a plain wooden coffin. King Offa then ordered a rich shrine to be made for the sacred relics, and founded a great Benedictine monastery in memory of the Saint, the church of which, in spite of all the vicissitudes it has undergone, is still one of the finest Norman buildings in England. Of the actual shrine given by the Saxon monarch nothing now remains, but a marble slab marks the spot in the abbey where the bones of the martyr are said to rest.

Representations of St. Alban are of rare occurrence, but he sometimes appears amongst the martyrs with a small fountain gushing up at his feet; on a brass commemorative of Abbot Delamere at St. Albans he is introduced holding a long-hilted cross in one hand and a sword in the other, and in a church dedicated to him and St. Martin at Cologne he is represented carrying his own head.

Contemporary with St. Alban of England were the two young Arabian doctors, Cosmas and Damianus, who are honoured alike in the Eastern and Western Churches as 'silverless doctors,' or healers who took no fees. They are said to have been brought up as Christians by their mother, and to have early become celebrated for their great skill in medicine. Inheriting a good income from their father, who died when they were children, they never took any payment for their services, for which reason the Greeks gave them the honourable title of *oi ἄγιοι ἀναπυγότοι*, or the unmercenary. They were living happily in the city of Egæa in Cilicia, devoting their lives to the care of sufferers of every rank, when the rumour of their zeal for the cause of the poor, marking them out as Christians, attracted the attention of the heathen authorities, and they were arrested by order of the Governor. On their refusal to recant, they were condemned to death by drowning and were thrown into the sea, but an angel is said to have saved them. An equally fruitless attempt was made to burn them at a stake, for they remained unharmed, whilst the flames rushed out and slew their would-be executioners. Crucifixion was next tried, and the faithful sufferers were stoned as they hung

on their crosses ; yet still they survived, some of the stones flung at them killing the bystanders. Then, as a last resource, they were dragged outside the town to be beheaded, and no further supernatural interference took place on their behalf. Their bodies are supposed to have been taken to Syria and buried at Cyrus, where they remained until the sixth century, when they were removed to Rome and re-interred in the church built in their honour and named after them by Pope Felix IV. in 826.

Many and wonderful have been the supposed cures brought about since their death by the intercession of the two brothers. The Greeks gave to them all the credit which used to accrue to the god *Æsculapius*, and distinguished them by the title of Anarguri, meaning ‘without fees.’ The Emperor Theodosius credited them with saving his life in a dangerous illness ; and in comparatively modern times a man suffering from cancer in the leg, who prayed at their shrine in Rome, is said to have been actually operated on by them in a deep sleep which overtook him in the midst of his devotions. When he awoke, he found a new leg in the place of his own, and related that, as he slept, Saints Cosmas and Damianus stood beside him, one holding a sharp knife, the other a box of ointment, in his hand. One of the celestial visitors then said : ‘If we cut off the bad leg, how shall we replace it?’ To which his brother replied : ‘A Moor has just been buried in S. Pietro in Vincoli ; we will take one of his legs.’ This they did, and having anointed the joint with ointment, they disappeared. Those to whom the subject of the miracle told the wondrous tale hastened to the tomb of the Moor, and found that the diseased white leg lay in the place of the healthy brown one, so that all doubt of the truth was set at rest.

The symbols by which the two young doctors may be recognised in art are peculiarly characteristic, and have all of them more or less direct reference to their profession. These symbols are : a transparent phial or jar, with or without a cover, a lancet, a small case of instruments, a box of ointment, and a cylinder, the last-named supposed to represent the rod or wand occasionally placed in the hand of those about to be bled, to facilitate the flow of blood. To these are sometimes added, as on the reverse side of a leaden medal found in the Seine, bearing the effigies of the brothers, a comb, a pair of scissors, and a razor, evidently because Saints Cosmas



Hansjärgl photo

ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST, WITH ST. COSMAS AND OTHER SAINTS
By Fra Filippo Lippi

[*National Gallery, London*]

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and Damianus were early chosen as patrons by the Barber-surgeons of Paris.

The martyrs were, of course, from the first supposed to look after the interests of doctors and dealers in drugs, and they are also appealed to by midwives and by mothers whose children suffer from convulsions in teething. They are among the patron Saints of Bohemia, of Florence, Salamanca, and Zurich, and, strange to say, the powerful family of the Medici claim to be under their special protection, perhaps because the name of Cosmo de Medici resembled that of one of the brothers, but more probably on account of the similarity between the words *Medici* and *medecin*, for, though they retain in their coat-of-arms the symbol of the pills, the haughty Florentines would have scorned to trace their origin from men so humble as the feeless doctors.

In a quaint old engraving in the Chronicle of Nuremberg one brother appears to be much older than the other ; but as a rule the two doctors are represented as quite young men. In the beautiful painting by Pesellino, now in the Louvre, for instance, in which they are bending over a boy, who is lying in an insensible condition on a bed, whilst a woman is hastening forward, bringing a plaster and some bandages.

In the mosaics of the apse of SS. Cosmo e Damiano at Rome, the two doctors are seen being presented to the Saviour by Saints Peter and Paul; and in all that is now left of S. Michele in Africisco at Ravenna are a few remains of mosaics in which the brothers were grouped with the Archangels Michael and Gabriel on either side of Christ. They are very constantly introduced in devotional pictures, wearing the red fur-trimmed robes and fur caps of their profession. Fra Angelico especially had a great predilection for them. They appear with St. Dominic on one side of the Virgin in the 'Madonna d'Annalena,' now in the Florence Academy; with St. Peter in the 'Madonna of S. Bonaventura' in the same collection; in the 'Great Crucifixion' still in San Marco, Florence, in which they are on the right of the penitent thief near St. Lawrence and St. Mark; and in the great Altar-piece known as the 'Madonna di San Marco,' painted by Fra Angelico by order of Cosmo de Medici, now in the Florence Academy, they kneel on a carpet at the foot of the shrine, with Saints Dominic, Francis,

Lawrence, and others. On the predella of this grand work was painted a series of scenes from the lives of Saints Cosmas and Damianus, from their first appearance before the judge to their martyrdom; but, unfortunately, these beautiful pictures are now dispersed—one is at Dublin, one at Munich, and one in the Louvre, Paris, whilst the rest are in the Florence Academy.

In the National Gallery, London, there is an interesting picture by a Greek priest named Emanuel, representing Christ blessing Saints Cosmas and Damianus; in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, is a fine painting of the 'Beheading of the brothers,' by Pesellino; and in the same collection is a quaint representation of the 'Miracle of the Leg,' by an unknown hand, in which the physicians are fastening a black leg on to the body of the sleeper, whilst the dead man lies near with a white leg beside him.

The Martyrdom of Saints Cosmas and Damianus was very realistically rendered by Tintoretto in the Altar-piece still in S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, and a painting of the same subject, by Salvator Rosa, is in S. Giovanni de' Fiorentini, Rome, but they are neither of them in any way equal to the scattered predella pictures of Fra Angelico's San Marco 'Madonna.' In the beautiful bas-relief of the 'Virgin and Child' by Luca Della Robbia in S. Maria della Misericordia, Florence, the brothers appear on either side of the central group, and there still remain good statues of them in the niches above the figures of the Apostles and Martyrs in the remarkable bronze doors, designed by Donatello, of the old Sacristy of S. Lorenzo, Florence.

Another doctor who suffered martyrdom about the same time as Saints Cosmas and Damianus was St. Pantaleon of Nicomedia, a man of noble birth, fascinating personality, and high culture, who when still in early youth attracted the attention of the Emperor Galerius Maximianus, and was by him appointed Court physician at Rome. The son of a heathen father, but of a Christian mother, Pantaleon had been secretly baptized in infancy, and had been taught the principles of Christianity. These principles do not, however, appear to have taken very deep root in his character, for he at first concealed his religion, taking part with his fellow-courtiers in the worship of the gods. He was, fortu-

[National Gallery, Dublin]

THE FRUSTRATED ATTEMPT TO BURN SAINTS COSMAS AND DAMIANUS

By Fra Angelico



nately, later brought to a better mind by an old priest named Hermolaus, who persuaded him to avow himself a Christian, and to use his medical skill for the poor in Rome, seeking no earthly reward. The change in all his habits which now took place—for he devoted every spare moment to nursing the sick—soon attracted the notice of his fellow-courtiers, and the rumour of the miracles his faith enabled him to perform, came to the ears of the Emperor himself. Anxious to save his favourite, Galerius sent for him, and admonished him in private. But it was of no use. St. Pantaleon remained steadfast, and reluctantly his master was obliged to allow the law to take its course. After a public trial the doctor was condemned to death, and was, it is said, first bound to a barren olive-tree, with his hands nailed to the top of his head, the blood from his wounds, as it dropped down the trunk, causing foliage and fruit to sprout forth. When at last the sufferer was led forth to be beheaded, even the sword, generally so immediately fatal, refused to harm him, remaining suspended in the air in spite of all the efforts of the executioner to wield it, till the martyr himself prayed aloud to God to allow it to end his pain. The aged priest Hermolaus, who had been with his pupil from the first, cheering him with his presence, shared his fate; and the two friends are supposed to have been buried together where they fell. The body of St. Pantaleon was, however, later translated to Constantinople, where a beautiful church, now destroyed, was built in his honour. Many cities claim to own a share of the young martyr's remains, part being shown at St. Denis, part at Oporto, and his head at Lyons, but there seems to be considerable doubt as to the authenticity of the relics.

St. Pantaleon is almost as much honoured in the medical profession as St. Luke, and his intercession is supposed to be specially efficacious in cases of consumption. He is generally represented in art as an extremely handsome young man, without a beard, wearing the loose red robes of a doctor, and holding in his hand the palm of the martyr or a branch of olive, the latter in allusion to the incident related above. Sometimes he is seen bound to a tree, with a sword at his feet, and occasionally he holds the sword and palm in one hand, whilst a lion crouches beside him, in allusion to a local tradition that after the torture on the tree, he was thrown to wild beasts, who would not harm him.

St. Pantaleon is sometimes introduced in devotional pictures, and may be distinguished from St. Sebastian, whom he greatly resembles in face and figure, by the position of his arms and hands. Paintings of scenes from his life and legend are rare; but in the church dedicated to him at Venice some of the miracles with which he was credited during his life are represented, including the 'Healing of a Boy,' by Paolo Veronese, whilst on the ceiling is a large composition by the little-known Fumiani, showing the young martyr in glory.

Other courtiers who fell victims to their zeal for the Christian faith in the sanguinary fourth century were St. Vitus of Sicily, with his nurse Crescentia and his foster-father Modestus; Saints Phocas of Sinope; Theodotus of Galatia; Sabas the Goth; the three friends, Tarachus, Protus and Andronicus of Cilicia; Julian of Antioch, Philemon the actor; and the child Pancras of Rome.

St. Vitus, also known as St. Guy, was the son of noble heathen parents, and was converted to Christianity by Crescentia, under whose care he had been placed by his father. At the age of twelve years the boy declared himself to be a Christian, and all attempts made to shake his faith by his own people having failed, he was taken before Valerianus, the Governor of Sicily, who ordered him to be flogged. It is related that the arms of those who attempted to carry out the sentence became paralyzed, so that they could not wield their whips, and the child was sent home again. He was there shut up for some time in an upper room, where he was visited by angels of such dazzling brightness that his father, who had looked through a crack in the door, was struck blind. Restored to sight by the prayers of his boy, the father seems to have been all but convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, and would gladly have saved Vitus from further persecution. He therefore connived at his escape with Crescentia and Modestus, and the three reached Italy in safety, aided, it is said, by an angel who steered their boat. They were, however, soon arrested by order of the heathen authorities, and were martyred in Lucania by being flung into a caldron of boiling oil.

Little as is really known of St. Vitus, he has become one of the most popular Saints of Christendom. He is the patron of Bohemia, as well as of his native land of Sicily, and is one of the

fourteen auxiliary Saints specially honoured in Germany. He is invoked by ballet-dancers and comedians, and is supposed to be able to guard his votaries against nervous diseases, madness, the bites of mad dogs, and against oversleeping themselves. To explain fully why a martyr who died at the early age of fourteen should be credited with such remarkable powers is impossible, but the name of St. Vitus' dance having been given to the nervous affection known to doctors as chorea, is probably the reason that dancers turn to the young Saint for aid. His early death may possibly be the origin of the belief in his aid against too much sleep, and the symbol of the cock, often associated with him, evidently has reference to the same thing. As late as the eighteenth century it was customary in some districts, notably in Prague, to sacrifice a cock in honour of St. Vitus on his fête day, June 15.

Amongst other attributes of St. Vitus are a dog held in leash, some say in reference to the faithfulness of Crescentia and Modestus, who died rather than desert their foster-child. A lion is sometimes introduced beside him, for, according to one version of his legend, he was exposed in the amphitheatre before his death in the boiling oil, and occasionally a wolf takes the place of the dog or the lion, for his body is said to have been guarded by a wolf from other beasts of prey until it was buried. In his '*Caractéristiques des Saints*,' Père Cahier reproduces a beautiful German representation of St. Vitus with Modestus and Crescentia, the child, his cock at his feet, holding the martyr's palm in one chubby little hand, whilst he holds up the other in the act of benediction. The older martyrs walk behind him with their palms, Modestus bending forward as if whispering encouragement to his little charge. There are two fine paintings by Wohlgemuth of St. Vitus, one in the Castle of Nuremberg, and the other in the Moritz Chapel; in the Cathedral of Prague is a shrine said to contain one of his arms, adorned with a good modern statue of him; his '*Martyrdom*,' with Saints George and Wolfgang looking on, by Bassetti of Verona, is in the Munich Gallery, and in the Campana Museum, Paris, is a devotional picture by Fontana, in which St. Vitus is associated with St. Peter Chrysologus, Bishop of Ravenna in the sixth century.

St. Phocas was the son of humble Christian parents, after

whose death he dwelt alone outside the town of Sinope in Pontus, cultivating a beautiful garden and giving gratuitous hospitality to all who cared to receive it. His good works told against him with the heathen authorities, for none but the Christians gave alms in those days, and presently soldiers were sent to kill him. They came in due course to the gates of Sinope, and finding them closed for the night, they asked Phocas to receive them, not knowing who he was. The gardener bade them welcome, fed them well, and after supper asked them to tell him what their business was in the town. They replied that they were seeking a Christian named Phocas, and had orders to put him to death wherever they might find him; could he, perhaps, help them in their quest? Their host replied calmly that he could, but he would rather wait until the morrow, and begged them to remain with him for the night. They consented, and were escorted to a comfortable room by their host, who promised to call them early. Phocas then spent the night in prayer and in digging his own grave. The next morning he woke his guests, told them his name, and urged them to do their duty without delay. They hesitated, for they were unwilling to harm one whose hospitality they had enjoyed; but he entreated them to get the matter over, encouraging them by saying, 'Since it is the will of God, I am willing to die.' So they followed him to the ready-made grave, struck off his head, and buried him. The place where the martyr so bravely met his fate was long greatly honoured by his countrymen, even the heathen, it is said, reverencing it on account of the heroism with which he met his fate. Sailors used to salute it as they passed it afar on the Black Sea, and when the persecution of the Christians subsided on the conversion of Constantine, a beautiful church was built above it. Magnificent gifts were offered at the shrine, and even pirates who ravaged the coast refrained from touching them. Later the greater portion of the sacred relics was translated to Constantinople, with much pomp, the Emperor following the procession from the shores of the Bosphorus on foot.

St. Phocas, whom the Greeks call the *hiero*, or sacred martyr, is the patron Saint of gardeners and of mariners, and it is said that in olden times Greek sailors used to set aside in his honour a portion of every meal eaten on shore. This

portion was sold, and the profits, often amounting to a large sum, were given to the poor.

In spite of the veneration in which he is held, representations of St. Phocas are rare, but he is introduced as an old man wearing the coarse habits of a gardener, and with a spade in his hand, in the mosaics of San Marco at Venice, and in those of the Cathedral of Monreale.

St. Theodotus of Galatia, who appears occasionally in Greek works of art, holding a torch and a sword, in allusion to his having been first tortured with burning brands and then beheaded, was an innkeeper, who had been converted to Christianity in his boyhood by a saintly maiden named Thecusa. He married early in life, and brought up his family in his own faith. It is said that he carried on a very thriving business, though he allowed no one to drink too much in his house, but converted many of his guests to the true religion. When the fierce persecution under Diocletian was raging, St. Theodotus fed and sheltered many of the persecuted, visited those in prison, and buried the dead, although he knew full well that by so doing he must in the end seal his own fate. All went well with him, however, for some time, till he was discovered aiding in the recovery of the bodies of seven virgins, one of whom was his old friend and teacher, Thecusa, from a pond into which they had been flung after their martyrdom. Betrayed by a trusted friend who accused him to save his own life, Theodotus was arrested, but offered freedom if he would sacrifice to the gods. He refused, and after being torn on the rack, broken on the wheel, and burnt with torches, he was beheaded. His body was then given to some soldiers, with orders that it should be burned to ashes, to prevent the Christians from burying it. The story goes that, as the men were on their way from the city to obey these instructions, they met a priest named Fronton, an old friend of St. Theodotus, to whom the martyr had given a ring, in pledge that he would one day send him some valuable relics for his church. Fronton guessed at once that St. Theodotus must have meant his own body, so he plied the guards with wine, and when they fell into a drunken sleep carried away the treasure on his ass. The ring was replaced on the dead man's finger, and the body was buried in the presence of many Christian fugitives.

St. Sabas the Goth, whose legend is not, however, very well

authenticated, is worthy of special mention as having been the first of his nation to suffer death for the faith. He was martyred about 372 by order of King Athanasie, and it is related that many unsuccessful attempts were made to kill him before he was finally despatched by being strangled in a river, into which he was flung with an axle-tree fastened round his neck. His distinctive symbol in art is a bundle of thorns held in one hand, in allusion to his having been dragged naked over rough ground and briers. Jacques Callot has represented him standing in a caldron of boiling pitch; others have chosen his actual death in the river for their subject, and in certain Iconographies of the Saints he appears hanging to a tree by his hands, which are nailed to the trunk, although in the account of his many sufferings given in the 'Acta Sanctorum' there is no reference to this particular detail.

Saints Tarachus, Protus and Andronicus of Cilicia were all of noble birth, and, though not related to each other, had long been close friends when they were arrested as Christians, and after being tortured for many weeks were beheaded in the amphitheatre, the wild beasts to whom they were thrown having refused to hurt them. They are represented in art either all together, generally just before their sufferings ended in death, or separately, Saints Protus and Andronicus each bound to a post with a knife piercing his heart, and St. Tarachus standing before his judges, one of whom is urging him to sacrifice to an idol, whilst a soldier with a big stone in his hand awaits the order to fling it at the prisoner. St. Tarachus is one of the patron Saints of Madeira, the Cathedral of which is said to own his skull, and he is invoked by those suffering from brain diseases, probably because he is said to have been branded on the forehead with a red-hot coal. He and his companions, though greatly honoured for their constancy, are somewhat blamed by certain writers for their freedom of speech at their trial, Tarachus especially having greatly incensed his judges by the way in which he bandied words with them.

St. Julian of Antioch, whose legend greatly resembles that of St. Julian the Hospitable, with whom he is often confounded, was a young man of noble birth. Converted as a child to Christianity, he had vowed that he would dedicate his life to God, and he was therefore greatly dismayed when

his parents arranged a marriage for him with a beautiful girl, whose name, Basilassa, was the same as that of the wife of his namesake, the hermit. It was, however, revealed to St. Julian in a dream that his bride was also a Christian, who had made a promise similar to his own. When the two had consulted together, they resolved to be married to please their parents, but to remain true to their vows and spend their time working for the poor. One day, when they were praying together, an angel appeared to them, and told them that their names were written in the Book of Life, and that the trial of their faith was approaching. Soon after this St. Julian was arrested, and condemned to be tortured. As the executioners were performing their horrible duty, one of them accidentally put out the eyes of the other, and St. Julian healed the sufferer, saying to him: 'The gods you wish me to worship could have done nothing for you, but to Christ, my Lord, all things are possible.' The incident so enraged the Emperor that he ordered fresh anguish to be inflicted on the young martyr. Amongst the crowds watching the sufferings of St. Julian was a little boy named Celsus, whose eyes were opened to see a band of white-robed angels placing a crown on the head of the sufferer. The child ran to St. Julian, pushing his way through the executioners, and was, it is said, martyred with him the next day, though his mother went to the prison in which the two were confined, to try and save him. By this time Celsus had been baptized; nothing would induce him to leave his new friend, and he was beheaded at the same time as St. Julian. According to one account, St. Basilassa long survived her husband, but according to another she was martyred with him and the little Celsus. In any case, the married pair are always represented together, each with a lily and a book, the former in allusion to their chastity, the latter to the visit of the angel.

St. Philemon of Rome, whose legend is very graphically told by Mephrastes, and who is sometimes represented by German artists with a musical instrument, not unlike a bagpipe, in his hand, is said to have been a celebrated strolling player who laid down his life for a friend. This friend, a professional scribe named Apollonius, who had been converted to Christianity, was summoned by the heathen authorities to sacrifice to the gods, and, unwilling either to deny his faith or to suffer the consequences of refusing to do so, he persuaded Philemon to

change clothes with him and go to the temple in his stead. On the way to the trial the young actor resolved to go through with the matter to the end, and proclaimed himself a Christian. He was condemned to death, and his constancy is said to have so touched Apollonius that he came forward at the last moment to share his fate.

St. Pancras of Rome, who appears occasionally either alone or with other martyrs, holding a sword in his hand, was beheaded at the age of fourteen, having hastened his own doom by publicly declaring himself a Christian before he was accused. He is much honoured, not only in Rome, where there is a church dedicated to him near the scene of his martyrdom, but also in France and in England. A large parish in London bears his name, and St. Augustine dedicated to him the temple at Canterbury in which King Ethelbert used to sacrifice to the heathen gods, when it was converted into a Christian church after the conversion of the monarch.

For some reason hitherto unexplained, the young martyr is supposed to protect his votaries from false witnesses ; in olden times it was customary for French monarchs to swear by St. Pancras to keep their treaties faithfully, and it was supposed that none who took his name in vain escaped punishment from Heaven.

CHAPTER VI

ST. GEORGE AND OTHER WARRIOR SAINTS

OF the many soldiers who, in the early part of the fourth century, fought the good fight of faith, and were as eager to lay down their lives for the cause of Christ as for that of their country, none is more widely celebrated than St. George, who is called by the Greeks the great martyr, and is honoured throughout Christendom as the very pattern of chivalry, the ideal knight of spotless fame, who was from first to last without fear and without reproach.

Although the very existence of St. George has been denied by some, whilst others wrongly identify him with Archbishop

George of Alexandria, who was killed by the people of that city in a fit of rage against his misgovernment, there seems little doubt that there really was a Christian soldier of Cappadocia named George, who did great things for his fellow-believers, and was put to death about 303 by order of Diocletian. Round about these simple facts, however, have gathered many quaint and touching legends, full, in spite of their utter improbability, of spiritual significance.

Briefly told, the story of St. George is as follows: the son of noble parents, who had been converted to Christianity, he was baptized in infancy, and lived happily at his home in Cappadocia till the death of his father, when his mother took him with her to Palestine, where she owned a large estate, of which the boy was the heir. When he was old enough he joined the Roman army, and soon rose to the rank of tribune. On one of his military journeys he came to a certain city—some say Selene in North Africa; others, Berytus in Syria—where the people were suffering terrible things from a great dragon dwelling in a marsh near by, from which he daily came forth to devour all who fell in his way, poisoning the air with his foetid breath for miles around. Every day two sheep, or oxen, were set aside for him, and when all the flocks and herds had been destroyed, the children had to be sacrificed. The poor little victims were chosen by lot from those under fifteen, and on every side was heard nothing but mourning and lamentation. Presently the lot fell upon the only daughter of the King, a beautiful maiden named Cleodolinda, and her father offered all his wealth to save her in vain, for the people cried out against him, and would have taken her away by force had he not yielded to their demand. They did, however, grant him eight days' delay, and at the end of that time the young girl, having first asked her father to bless her, and told him she was willing to die for her people, was led to the gates of the town, which, when she had issued forth, were closed against her.

As the doomed maiden, clad in her beautiful robes and with her golden hair streaming down her back, went her trembling way to meet her doom, she saw a noble knight mounted on a fine horse approaching her, who, reining up his steed, asked her whither she was going. She told him, and he cried at once that he would save her. She replied that that would be impossible, and begged him to escape before the dragon should

see him. To which he answered: ‘God forbid that I should fly. I will deliver thee from this horrible beast in the name of Jesus Christ, whose soldier I am.’ As he spoke these brave words, the monster came forth from his marsh, and, spreading his great wings, flew heavily towards the two. Then St. George dashed upon the enemy, making the sign of the cross, and after a brief but fierce struggle he drove his lance through the body of the dragon, pinning him to the ground. Though mortally wounded, the terrible creature was not yet dead, so St. George bound him with the girdle of the rescued maiden, and bade her lead him into the city, that all might see there was nothing more to fear. When, after some difficulty, the people were induced to open the gates again, the strange procession, escorted by crowds, made its way to the palace of the King. The monarch, overjoyed at the return of his daughter, promised to give her rescuer anything he asked, to which the hero replied that all he wished was the conversion of the monarch and his people to Christianity, adding that if they would be baptized he would kill their enemy in sight of them all. To this the King agreed; he and twenty thousand of his subjects became Christians, the dragon’s head was cut off, and St. George went on his way again rejoicing.

In course of time the slayer of the dragon rose to high rank in the Roman army, and when Diocletian began the fresh persecutions of the Christians, it is said that St. George endeavoured to plead for them; but, finding nothing he could do of any avail, he resigned all his appointments, refusing to serve against his fellow-believers. He even went so far as to tear down the Imperial edict from the gates of the temple in the city of Nicomedia and trample it under his feet. As a matter of course he was arrested and tortured, but nothing could shake his fortitude. After being bound to a cross for eight days, during which his body was torn with iron nails, he was compelled to drink a cup of poison, which did him no harm, for he made the sign of the cross over it as he put it to his lips. Then he was fastened to a wheel studded with sharp knives, but two angels came from heaven and released him; and when he was dragged once more to the temple, in the hope that his sufferings would make him recant, his prayers caused the building with its idols to fall upon the priests and worshippers, who were all killed. Then at last the judge ordered him to be beheaded, and, bending his neck to the blow,

the gallant young soldier died with a smile of joy upon his lips.

The story of St. George and the dragon is now generally supposed to be but a comparatively modern form of the old myth, which is common to every branch of the great Aryan family, of the Sun-god, whose rays dispel all evil, whilst the rescued maiden is said by certain writers to typify merely the conversion of some city to Christianity, it having been customary amongst the Greeks to personify their towns and provinces by a female form. However this may be, the story of St. George's gallant rescue of the King's daughter took, from the first, a deep hold upon the popular imagination, and no legend of the Saints is more generally believed than it, in spite of the fact that it was omitted from the reformed Roman Calendar at the end of the fifth century.

St. George is said to have been buried in Palestine, and a church was built over his tomb by Constantine, who also erected one in his honour at Constantinople; hence the name of the Arm of St. George given to a portion of the Hellespont. A great impulse was given to the cult of the warrior Saint during the Crusades, when he is said to have appeared, first to Godfrey de Bouillon, and later to Richard I., on the eve of battle, in each case securing victory to the Christians. He was henceforth venerated as the patron Saint of England. His fête-day was kept as a public holiday, and when, in 1334, the most noble Order of the Garter was founded by Edward III., the name of St. George succeeded that of the Virgin amongst those in whose honour it was instituted. Later the Order became known as that of St. George. An effigy of the young soldier slaying the dragon is part of the insignia of the knights, and they meet every year on the eve of his festival in the chapel named after him at Windsor. The red cross of St. George is a fundamental feature of the national flag of England; the red rose of St. George is a favourite badge of the English, as the thistle is of the Scotch, or the shamrock of the Irish, and the leek of the Welsh.

St. George is not only the patron Saint of England, where nearly 200 churches are dedicated to him, but his effigy is stamped on the gold coinage of Constantinople, of Antioch, and of a very great number of Continental cities. He is also held in high honour by the Knights of the great Teutonic

Order of Chivalry, founded in the twelfth century. Military men of several European countries appeal to him for aid; he is supposed to give special attention to the interests of archers, and is one of the fourteen auxiliary Saints of Germany, where he is generally classed with St. Eustace. In France and elsewhere he is affectionately spoken of as 'le chevalier de la belle monture'; and horses are placed under his protection when they are turned out to grass. In some old calendars, April 23, the fête-day of St. George, is marked by a horse holding the head of a lance in one hoof; and everywhere throughout Europe the favourite knight is associated with a noble steed, 'mounted like a St. George' being a common expression to indicate a rider on a fine horse.)

When introduced amongst other Saints in devotional pictures, St. George may be easily recognised by the ideal beauty of his face and figure, and by his complete suit of armour, which is sometimes that of a Roman soldier, more often that of a mediæval knight. He generally holds a lance, from which sometimes floats a banner bearing a red cross, in one hand, and rests the other on the hilt of his sword, whilst the vanquished dragon is constantly seen lying at his feet. In early representations of the fight with the terrible beast, it was usual to introduce a young girl kneeling near, awaiting the issue of the conflict; but as time went on she was omitted, except in some few Byzantine and later pictures, when the struggle became a purely symbolic one between the powers of good and evil.

In mediæval times it was customary for knights to have little leaden images of St. George and the dragon—such as one of those found in the Seine, preserved in the Cluny Museum—fastened to the riding cloak or hood. In various stained-glass windows, as in one in the Cathedral of Chartres, his effigy in full armour, with shield, lance and sword, is supplemented by a quaint representation of the torture of the wheel, in which the martyr stands in the centre with the points of twelve knives in his body, whilst two men are about to whirl the wheel round, each holding one end of a chain fastened to the sufferer's hands. Sometimes St. George, mounted on a beautiful horse, is seen on the ramparts of a besieged town, and the Blessed Virgin is stretching a thread between him and the assailants, in allusion to a legend of local origin only.

When St. George is represented as the patron Saint of England, he has the garter fastened round one knee, and the star of the Order embroidered on his mantle; but when he appears as the guardian of other cities these emblems are omitted.

Of the many fine devotional pictures in which St. George is introduced, may be named the Stefaneschi Altar-piece, by Giotto, in which the warrior Saint kneels at the feet of the enthroned St. Peter; the 'Madonna with St. George' in the Dresden Gallery, by Coreggio, the last altar-piece painted by that great master; the 'Madonna with the kneeling senators,' by Tintoretto, in SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice; the 'Madonna and Saints,' by Cima da Conegliano, in the Venice Academy; the 'Blessed Virgin and Child,' by Memlinc, in the National Gallery, London, in which St. George, with a very innocent-looking dragon at his feet, stands behind the kneeling donor of the picture; the 'Apotheosis of St. Ambrose,' by Alvise Vivarini, in S. Maria Gloriosa, Venice; and the great Altar-piece by Rubens, in his own sepulchral chapel in the Church of St. Jacques at Antwerp, in which the St. George is a portrait of the painter himself.

Fine single figures of this most popular Saint are the celebrated marble Statue by Donatello, now in the Museo Nazionale, Florence, originally executed for the west front of Or San Michele in that city; the Bas-relief, by Luca della Robbia, in the Church of Pieve di Brancoli; the colossal Figure in mosaic in the Cathedral of Monreale; and the Statue on the south porch of Chartres Cathedral.

Of the countless representations of St. George slaying the dragon, few are more celebrated than the two by Raphael, one in the Louvre, Paris, the other in the Hermitage of St. Petersburg, both fine realizations of the ideal knight overcoming the spirit of evil; the painting by Sodoma, in the possession of Sir Francis Cook, of Richmond, Surrey, in which the Princess is seen in the foreground eagerly awaiting the result of the fiery onslaught of her deliverer; the quaint rendering of the same subject by Crivelli, the property of Mrs. Gardiner of Boston, which has all the lavish ornament characteristic of its author's earlier work; the ('St. George slaying the Dragon,' by Ghirlandajo, in the Church of the Ognisanti, Florence; the same subject, by Tintoretto, in the National Gallery,

London; and that by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, in private possession.

In the ancient Chapel of S. Georgio, adjoining the Scuola of S. Antonio at Padua, are some very early frescoes, by Jacopo d'Avanzo and Altichieri, of the legend of St. George, including the Fight with the dragon, the Baptism of the King, Queen, and their whole Court, the various futile attempts to kill the hero, and his final Martyrdom. In the Church of S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni at Venice are some very dramatic renderings of the St. George legend by Carpaccio; in S. Ambrogio, Milan, the same subject has been well treated in fresco by Bernardino Luini; in S. Giorgio in Braida, Verona, is a beautiful Altar-piece, by Paolo Veronese, representing the Martyrdom of the Saint; and the same subject has been ably treated by Rubens.

In the Martinengo Gallery, Brescia, there is a very poetic rendering of the dragon incident, ascribed to Quirico da Murano, and on a shield preserved in the Casa Rodriguez at Bologna is a fine design attributed to Francia, who had a special predilection for St. George, representing the warrior-martyr as a noble young knight engaged in a spirited conflict with a very formidable dragon. On this quaint relic of the days of chivalry are inscribed in Latin the following quotations from the New Testament, 'But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way,' and 'If, therefore, ye seek Me, let these go their way,' which, as remarked by Dr. Williamson in his able monograph on Francia, points to the spiritual nature of the conflict, and the desire of the hero to fight it out alone.

St. George is very constantly introduced in stained-glass windows both in England and on the Continent. In the north-east transept of Hereford Cathedral is a fine example of fourteenth-century work, which had long been packed away in separate pieces, but was restored and placed in its present position in 1864, representing Saints George, Catherine of Alexandria, Gregory the Great, and Thomas of Canterbury; St. George also appears kneeling at the foot of the cross, beside Prince Arthur of Wales, in the beautiful east window of St. Margaret's, Westminster, which was originally designed as a marriage-gift to the heir of England from Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, the parents of his affianced bride; and in

one of the clerestory windows of the nave of Chartres Cathedral three scenes from the legend of St. George are given, with two from that of St. Giles.

Other martyred soldiers of the fourth century who have been admitted to the hierarchy of the Saints were Adrian, Didymus, Theodore of Heraclea, Theodore the Conscript, Victor of Marseilles, Victor of Milan, Menna the Greek, Procopius of Cesarea, and Florian of Austria. Of the first-named very little is known beyond the fact that he was an officer in the army of Maximianus, who was condemned to death because of his refusal to sacrifice to idols. Popular imagination has, however, supplemented this meagre information by a romantic story of the devotion of the martyr's wife, a beautiful young girl named Natalia, who was a Christian when Adrian married her, although he did not know it. It is said that he was very soon converted by her, and one day when he was sent to examine some Christians in prison, he was so touched by their replies that he said to the gaolers, 'Add my name to those of your prisoners, for I too am a Christian.' They complied, and when the news was brought to the Emperor he was greatly enraged. St. Adrian was summoned before him and bravely answered all the questions put to him, glorying in the despised name of Christian. He was remanded to prison to await his trial, and there he was visited by his wife, who rejoiced that he had been found worthy to suffer for Christ. She encouraged him to persevere, and promised to be with him through whatever should befall him. Presently he was condemned to death, and he bribed his gaoler to let him go to say good-bye to his wife. When he appeared at the door of their home, Natalia thought he had recanted, and closed it against him, upbraiding him bitterly for his apostasy, but when he explained the truth she said she would return to prison with him. This she did disguised as a man, for a woman would not have been admitted, and she remained with him to the last. Amongst other tortures before he was beheaded, St. Adrian is said to have been stretched upon an anvil and to have had all his limbs broken with a hammer, Natalia standing by and herself placing his limbs in position. According to one version of his legend, the young martyr was one of twenty-four sufferers executed at the same time, and Natalia obtained for him the privilege of

dying first. Whether she was martyred herself is not known, but her name is always associated with that of her husband in martyrologies.

St. Adrian, who is one of the patron Saints of gaolers, executioners, and soldiers, is generally represented in art leaning against an anvil, on which he rests one hand, whilst in the other he holds the martyr's palm. Occasionally the palm is replaced or supplemented by a sword, a hammer, an iron bar, or a key, and now and then a lion crouches at his feet; why is not known, but it is supposed to have reference to his indomitable courage under his sufferings, and to the constancy of his wife. In Flanders St. Adrian is sometimes introduced amongst other Saints, wearing the costume of a pilgrim, probably on account of the immense number of pilgrims who flock to the little town of Grammont, which claims to own his relics. In some old engravings a wheel is associated with St. Adrian, although there is no reference in his legend to his having suffered on it. It has, however, been suggested that, like the key, it has reference to his being the patron of executioners, for torturing on the wheel was in olden times an important part of their profession, in which considerable skill was required.

Of St. Didymus, a young soldier of the Roman army, who appears sometimes amongst other martyrs with a sword or palm in his hands, the touching story is told that he rescued a beautiful maiden named Theodora from a fate worse than death, by changing clothes with her and allowing her to escape from the house in which she had been shut up, by order of the Prefect of Alexandria, for refusing to sacrifice to idols. In the brief interview between the two young people, St. Theodora converted St. Didymus to Christianity, and when the fraud he had practised was discovered, he proclaimed his new faith at once. He was taken before the judge and condemned to be beheaded, but just as the sword was about to fall, St. Theodora is said to have rushed out of the crowd of spectators, entreating to be allowed to die in his stead, even as he had taken her place in the house of detention. He refused, and the noble contest between the two for the crown of martyrdom was presently cut short by the authorities, who ordered both to be beheaded and the bodies to be burnt. Saints Didymus and Theodora are occasionally grouped together amongst other

martyrs, when the latter has her face hidden by a veil, in allusion to the incident of her rescue.

St. Theodore of Heraclea, who amongst the Greeks ranks with St. George of Cappadocia as one of the greatest of martyrs, is supposed to have been a General in the army of the Emperor Licinius, and to have been converted to Christianity when in the prime of life. According to one version of his legend, he brought his doom upon him by breaking up a number of gold and silver idols, and distributing the pieces to the poor, but according to another he set fire to a temple of Cybele, which was completely destroyed. His rank probably saved him from torture, and he was condemned to be beheaded, meeting his fate with the greatest composure.

St. Theodore is generally represented in the armour of a General, mounted on a fine horse and with a dragon or crocodile at his feet, some say in allusion to his having slain a terrible creature which had long devastated the country, others to his successful warfare against idolatry. A good statue of him was brought to Venice by the Doge Marco Dandolo, and is still to be seen on the Piazetta. He is one of the six warrior Saints of gigantic stature represented in mosaic in the Cathedral of Monreale, and in the mosaics above the altar in the Church of S. Teodoro at Rome he is introduced between Saints Peter and Paul.

St. Theodore the Conscript is supposed to have been a native of Amassia in Asia Minor, and to have been burnt alive as a punishment for having set fire to a heathen temple. He is generally called S. Teodoro Tiro, the surname being explained by some as having reference to the name of the legion to which he belonged, whilst others think it means the younger only. The Conscript Theodore is constantly confused with the General of the same name, and in some old Greek pictures he, too, rides a white horse, but this is in allusion to an apparition he is said to have seen, not to any rank in the army held by him. He may be distinguished from his namesake by his youthful appearance, and by the fact that his armour is that of a Christian knight, not of a Roman soldier. He appears sometimes in early mosaics, as in one preserved in the sacristy of S. Marco, Venice, and his legend is the subject of one of the stained-glass windows in the Cathedral of Chartres.

St. Victor of Marseilles, who is greatly honoured not only

in the seaport with which his name is associated, but throughout France, was a young soldier in the Roman army, who had been early converted to Christianity, and who, in the terrible persecution under Diocletian, is said to have gone about in the night cheering and aiding those under sentence of death. His zeal, of course, drew down on him the notice of his officers, and he was taken before Maximianus himself, who had lately arrived in the South of Gaul, fresh from the massacre of the Theban legion. It is related that when the young soldier was ordered to sacrifice at an altar he kicked it over, and the Emperor immediately ordered his foot to be cut off. Many other tortures were also inflicted upon him, and when the executioners were quite tired out with their exertions, he was placed under the grindstone of a mill, which it was hoped would crush him to powder in a few moments; but the machinery gave way before death came, and the sufferer was finally despatched with a sword. It is related that when St. Victor was stretched on the rack, at the beginning of his martyrdom, Christ appeared to him holding a cross, and that as his soul left his crushed and bleeding body angels were heard singing 'Vicisti, Victor Beate, vicisti.' With St. Victor were martyred two of his gaolers, whom he had converted in prison, and the three bodies were flung into the sea, but they were cast up on the beach shortly afterwards and buried by the Christians. Above their grave arose in the fifth century the celebrated monastery of St. Victor, the church of which, one of the oldest in France, still remains. Part of the relics of St. Victor were later taken to Paris, where a little chapel was built to receive them, and in the reign of Louis VI. was founded the celebrated community of Canons of St. Victor, the arms of which consisted of a wheel, in allusion to the martyrdom of the young soldier, some writers speaking of his having been torn to pieces on a kind of wheel, not crushed beneath a millstone.

St. Victor of Marseilles is generally represented in the armour of a Roman soldier, and occasionally he appears on horseback with a standard in his hand. More often he is on foot with a millstone on the ground beside him, and French image-makers place a model of a mill in his hand. In one of the windows of the Cathedral of Strasburg he is introduced in the chain armour and with the shield and spurs of a mediæval



Lombardi photo]

[Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

ST. VICTOR

By Sodoma

knight, and examples occur of a dragon appearing at his feet, but this is probably symbolic only of his victory over temptation. An overturned altar is another symbol by which St. Victor of Marseilles may be identified, and he is sometimes grouped with the gaolers who shared his fate.

St. Victor of Milan was also a soldier of the Roman army, and was born in Mauritania, hence the name sometimes given to him of the Moor. When in garrison at Milan in 303 A.D., he was denounced as a Christian, and, scorning to deny his faith, he was condemned to be put to the torture and beheaded. It is related that, after he had been stretched on the rack for hours, burning lead was poured over him, and for this reason he is sometimes represented standing near a fiery furnace. When life was extinct, his body was flung outside the city to be devoured by wild beasts, but two lions are said to have protected it from injury, until it was buried by some fellow-Christians. The fact that lions are not native to Northern Italy has not shaken the popular belief in the legend, and St. Victor is therefore often represented with a lion at his feet. He generally wears the picturesque armour of a Roman soldier, and holds an unsheathed sword in one hand. A fiery furnace sometimes appears beside him, in allusion to the torture he endured, and occasionally, as in a 'Madonna and Child with Saints,' by one of the Campi at Cremona, he is resting one foot on an overturned altar. St. Victor of Milan is often confounded with his namesake of Marseilles, but representations of the latter are rare out of France, and the many St. Victors of the North of Italy, of which the colossal figure by Sodoma in the Palazzo Pubblico at Siena is one of the best, are all probably intended for the martyr of Milan.

St. Menna, or Mennas, who occasionally appears with other martyrs in devotional pictures, was a soldier of Greek birth, executed in the great persecution under Diocletian with exceptional barbarity, his eyes having been put out and his hands cut off before death released him from his sufferings. His constancy, it is said, so touched his judge, Hermogenes, that he was converted to the true faith, and was beheaded immediately after the young hero he had condemned had passed away. The soldier Mennas must not be confounded with the hermit of Phrygia of the same name, who left the army to retire to the desert, and died a natural death.

St. Procopius of Cesarea is greatly honoured in the Greek Church, ranking amongst the most illustrious of the early martyrs. He is said to have held high rank in the Roman army, and is generally represented as a man in the prime of life, but without a beard, and the emblems by which he may be identified are a cross, a sword, and burning wood or a brazier beside him, each referring to some incident of his legend, which is a very romantic one and somewhat resembles the life of St. Paul. It is related that when Procopius was on his way to execute the orders of Diocletian against the Christians, he was suddenly thrown from his horse by an earthquake, and as he lay on the ground a luminous cross appeared in the sky above, whilst a voice, which rang out clearly in the midst of thunder, said to him: 'Whither goest thou, and against whom art thou marching with such eager zeal?' 'I am going to Alexandria,' replied the astonished officer, 'by order of the Emperor, to slay all the Galileans who will not renounce the name of Jesus Christ.' 'It is, then, on Me,' said the voice, 'that thou dost make war.' 'And who art Thou, Lord?' asked Procopius, unconsciously acknowledging the Divinity of the speaker. Then in the midst of the gleaming cross appeared the figure of the Saviour, and the soldier in mingled rapture and terror asked Him, if He were indeed God, how it was that He was scourged and crucified. The Master deigned to explain to him the mystery of His Passion, and when the vision faded Procopius resumed his journey a changed man.

Arrived at his destination, the new convert took no steps against the Christians, but went to a jeweller and asked to have a cross, such as that he had seen in the sky, made in silver. At first the jeweller refused, for the making of the emblem of the hated faith was forbidden, but when Procopius promised not to betray him, he consented to humour his customer. The legend minutely describes the cross, on one side of which was engraved the image of the Redeemer, and on the other the figures of the archangels Michael and Gabriel. With its aid Procopius won many signal victories over evil of every kind. On one occasion, when he was marching at the head of his troops against the Arabs, a cross again appeared to him in the sky, and a voice assured him of victory. His change of religion, of course, soon brought him into conflict

with the heathen authorities. His own mother, it is said, denounced him because he had broken the idols she revered, and he was condemned to be burnt to death. The flames, however, did him no harm, and he was in the end beheaded. According to another version of his story, St. Procopius was a native of Jerusalem, early converted to Christianity, who, when the persecution under Diocletian began, had won great repute amongst the Christians for his power over evil spirits. Though he did not withdraw from the world as did the hermits and monks, he practised the greatest austerities, eating nothing but bread and drinking nothing but water. He was one of the first to be arrested in the Holy City, and was taken to Cesarea, where, having refused to sacrifice to the gods, he was beheaded.

St. Florian, a very popular Saint in Austria, in Bohemia and in Poland, is supposed to have been a Roman soldier, a native of Lorsch, who was martyred at the end of the third century by being beaten with rods and then flung into the river Ens with a millstone round his neck. In spite of this precaution to insure the sinking of the corpse, it is said to have remained afloat, protected from injury by an eagle, which hovered above it, till it was taken from the water and buried by some Christians. Later the remains were removed to Rome and enshrined in the sacristy of St. Peter's, where they rested undisturbed until the twelfth century, when, at the request of King Casimir of Poland, they were sent to Cracow. The story goes that when the Pope received the embassy from the Polish monarch, asking for some relics for his cathedral, His Holiness, being in a somewhat facetious mood, went into the sacristy, and said in a loud voice, 'Now, which of you would like to go to Poland?' St. Florian stretched out his hand in reply, and his body was therefore sent to King Casimir, who received it with all due honour, re-interring it with great pomp.

On account of the manner of his death, St. Florian is invoked in cases of fire, and is constantly represented in Austria and Poland bending down from the sky, emptying a kind of bucket over a flaming city. He wears a half-military, half-clerical costume, for, according to one version of his legend, he was ordained deacon after his conversion. An eagle is sometimes introduced hovering above him, and now and then a tomb from which a hand is pointing is associated with him.

Two other young Romans, erroneously represented as soldiers in some devotional pictures, who were martyred in the latter part of the fourth century, were Saints John and Paul, stewards in the palace of the Princess Constantia, daughter of the great Emperor Constantine, who on her death left much of her wealth to them. Zealous Christians, they devoted their riches to the poor, and thus fell under the displeasure of Julian the Apostate, who threatened them with death if they would not sacrifice to idols. They, of course, refused, and to avoid a scandal, Christianity being now the religion of the State, the Emperor had them secretly beheaded in their own home. The truth, however, soon leaked out, for wonderful miracles were wrought at their tomb. The son of the very man who had carried out the sentence upon them was healed by touching it, and the people were convinced that the beloved brothers had been the victims of treachery. The grateful father and son became Christians, and one of the last acts of the apostate Emperor was to have them beheaded.

The house in which Saints John and Paul suffered was long held sacred, and early in the fifth century a small church was built on its site which enclosed within it part of their actual home. Injured when Rome was sacked by Robert Guiscard in the eleventh century, the church was restored and added to in the twelfth, it has since then been gradually transformed into a modern building. In the excavations beneath it, conducted in the last years of the nineteenth century, remains of two houses were discovered, in one of which, possibly that of the brothers, is preserved a fresco, said to be the very earliest representation of a Christian martyrdom still extant.

The sword, in allusion to the manner of their death, with the martyr's palm, are generally given to Saints John and Paul, and a thunderbolt is also sometimes associated with them, for they are invoked in Germany against storms, though why has not yet been ascertained.

In the fourth century perished also in Armenia the forty martyrs of Sebaste, who are occasionally represented in art as noble-looking young men, each with a crown. Though of different nationalities, they were all enrolled in the twelfth legion of the Roman army, and had all been converted to Christianity. It is related that when the order was issued by the Emperor Licinius that all the soldiers should offer sacri-

fice to the gods, the devoted forty refused, and every effort to shake their constancy having failed, they were exposed naked upon a frozen pond. To make the trial of their faith greater, a warm bath was prepared near the scene of their suffering, to which, it was announced, any one of them who would recant was at liberty to go. As the day wore on to night, the cold becoming more and more intense, the martyrs prayed aloud that all might have strength to endure to the end, adding the beautiful petition, 'Lord, we are forty who are engaged in this combat; grant that we may be forty crowned, and that not one be wanting to this sacred number.' In spite of this, however, the courage of one did fail, and he rushed to the warm bath; but, alas! he had no sooner plunged into it than he died, so that he gained nothing by his recantation. The remaining thirty-nine were greatly distressed at the loss of their comrade; but before the end came one of their guards was miraculously converted by a vision of angels, bearing crowns in their hands, hovering above the pond. Eager to share in the heavenly reward, he tore off his armour and took the place of the missing martyr, receiving the crown which would have been his. The bodies were burned and the ashes were thrown into the river; but some of them are supposed to have been collected by the Christians of Sebaste, and in course of time to have been translated to Constantinople, where they were long greatly honoured.

CHAPTER VII

SAINTS LUCY, AGNES, DOROTHEA AND CATHERINE

GREAT as was the constancy shown by the men who suffered in the terrible years preceding the conversion of Constantine, when the rage of the heathen against the Christians was intensified by the presentiment that the triumph of the hated sect was at hand, it was equalled, if not surpassed, by that of many women, in whose very weakness the strength of their faith was made perfect.

Amongst the maidens who, in the fourth century, gladly

laid down their lives for the truth on the threshold of their womanhood, none are more celebrated than Saints Lucy, Agnes, Dorothea and Catherine. Very quaint and touching, and in some cases very full of spiritual significance, are the legends which have in the course of centuries gathered about their memories, and very beautiful are many of the representations of them in sacred art, their tragic stories having appealed not only to the æsthetic sense, but also to the chivalry, of the great masters of the past.

St. Lucy was a native of Syracuse; her father died soon after she was born, and her widowed mother, Eutychia, brought her up as a Christian. The two lived happily together in their beautiful home till Lucy was fifteen, when she was betrothed to a noble young heathen, much against her own wishes, for she had already resolved to dedicate her life to Christ alone. With a wisdom beyond her years, however, she said nothing at the time, determined to watch for a favourable opportunity to break her intentions to her mother. That opportunity soon came, for Eutychia, who had long suffered from a painful disease, grew worse, and Lucy persuaded her to go with her on a pilgrimage to Catania to pray at the shrine of St. Agatha. As the mother and daughter knelt in supplication at the tomb, St. Agatha herself is said to have appeared to Lucy, and to have addressed her in the following words: 'O sister handmaid of Christ, well art thou called Lucia, for thou art indeed a light to the faithful; behold thy mother is healed . . . and even as Catania has been defended by me shall Syracuse be protected of Heaven for thy sake.'

Eutychia was of course delighted at her own recovery, and when her child, seizing this favourable moment, confided to her her dislike to marriage, begging that the dowry reserved for her should be given to the poor, the mother consented, only making the pathetic stipulation that Lucy should wait till she was dead to reduce her to absolute poverty. Even this consolation was, however, denied her, for her daughter pointed out to her that a gift which cost nothing to the giver was worthless in the sight of God. So poor Eutychia yielded everything, saying submissively: 'Do as thou wilt.'

Back again in Syracuse, St. Lucy sold her jewels and set to work to disperse the money amongst the most wretched in the city. The young nobleman to whom she was betrothed was not



Broggi photo

[Turin Gallery]

THE MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINT LUCY AND OTHER SAINTS

By Sodoma

unnaturally indignant, and when he reproached her she told him she could never be his wife. He tried to get her to alter her decision, and finding her obdurate, he accused her as a Christian to the Governor. She was arrested, ordered to sacrifice to idols, and when she refused she was condemned to be taken to a house of ill-fame, and there to be left to her fate. When the guards tried to take her away, however, a wonderful miracle was performed. They could not move her from where she stood, and even when oxen were harnessed to ropes fastened round her body, they failed to make the slightest impression upon her, though they pulled with all their strength. The most skilful magicians of the country were next sent for, and they cast upon the maiden all manner of spells in vain. She still stood like a rock, and the judge ordered piles of faggots to be placed around her, but when they were set fire to, the flames did not harm her. At last, at a sign from the Governor, who had lost all patience with his obstinate prisoner, a soldier plunged a sword or dagger into her throat, and she died with a smile of triumph on her lips. Her body was buried by her fellow-Christians, and is said to have been taken later to Venice.

Certain modern versions of the legend of St. Lucy add the revolting detail that her eyes were torn out before her death. This appears, however, to have had no foundation in fact, but to be the result of confusion having arisen between St. Lucy of Syracuse and another Saint of the same name, who lived considerably later. Of this second St. Lucy the story is told that, being worried by the persistent attentions of a young man, she one day asked him what made him follow her about as he did. He replied, 'It is the beauty of your eyes,' and to his horror the young girl at once plucked her eyes out of their sockets, and offered them to him, saying: 'Take what you want, then, and leave me in peace.' The lover repented of his importunity, became a Christian, and spent the rest of his life in good works. It is related further that the courageous maiden did not always remain blind, her sight having been suddenly restored to her one day when she was kneeling in prayer in her own room.

This quaint and gruesome legend, to whichever Lucy it really belongs, is very likely the outcome merely of the fact that the name of the heroine signifies light. In any case, St.

Lucy of Syracuse has for many centuries been invoked in Roman Catholic countries by those suffering from diseases of the eyes, and a lotion much in vogue in Italy and France is called the 'water of St. Lucy.'

The most constant attribute in art of St. Lucy of Syracuse is a pair of eyes on a plate, either held by her or placed beside her; but this emblem is sometimes replaced by a lamp, in allusion to her name. Now and then she holds a kind of dagger, the supposed instrument of her death, or a spindle, for, according to one version of her legend, she used one to pluck out her eyes. The martyr's palm is generally in her right hand, and examples occur of her holding three crowns, one indicating her noble birth, another her chastity, and the third her martyrdom. In groups of martyrs St. Lucy is often associated with Saints Thekla, Agnes, and Catherine.

In an old German print, reproduced by Père Cahier in his '*Caractéristiques des Saints*', St. Lucy and her mother are seen, kneeling at the tomb of St. Agatha on one side, and on the other, the executioner is plunging a dagger into the neck of the martyr, whilst the judge looks on from the background. Above the entrance to the Church of S. Lucia, Florence, is a beautiful bas-relief by Luca della Robbia, representing the young martyr holding her lamp; in an '*Enthroned Madonna*' by Barocchio, now in the Louvre, St. Lucy is offering her palm to the Virgin, and an angel beside her holds her eyes in a cup; in a fine painting by Sodoma in the Turin Gallery the Saint holds two eyes in a dish, and is looking out at the spectator, as if to call attention to them; in the '*St. Nicholas in Glory*', by Lorenzo Lotto, in the Carmine Church, Venice, the eyes are introduced in a plate on the clouds beside their owner, who is seated opposite St. John the Baptist; in a picture by Carlo Dolci in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, rays of light issue from the wound in the breast of the saint, in allusion, probably, to her name of Lucia; and in an oil-painting in the Prado Gallery, Madrid, Estilo de Correa has painted the martyred maiden with a plate containing her eyes in one hand, and a palm in the other.

More celebrated than any of these representations of St. Lucy is the great Altar-piece painted for her church at Florence by Domenico Veneziano, of which the upper part is now in the Uffizi Gallery in that city, and the predella at Berlin. In the

former the Madonna and Child are enthroned with Saints John the Baptist and Francis on one side, and Saints Nicholas and Lucy on the other, whilst on the predella the Martyrdom of the maiden is represented as taking place in the presence of a crowd of spectators. In the Jesi Library are three panels by Lorenzo Lotto, representing the chief scenes of the St. Lucy legend; and in a much-defaced fresco at Padua, the frustrated attempt of oxen and men to drag the maiden from the judgment-hall is rendered in a very realistic manner. There is a fine painting of the actual Martyrdom by L. Bassano in S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, and one by G. Massarotti at Cremona, in which the victim is bound to a stake, calmly awaiting the death-blow.

The legend of St. Agnes greatly resembles that of St. Lucy, but she was even younger than her fellow-martyr when she met her terrible fate. The daughter of noble Roman parents, she was sought in marriage at the early age of thirteen by Sempronius, the son of the Prefect of Rome, but rejected his advances with scorn, declaring that she meant to be the bride of none but Christ. Her lover tried to induce her to listen to him by offering her all manner of costly gifts, but she refused to accept them, saying, 'I am betrothed to One greater and fairer than any earthly suitor, who will crown me with jewels compared to which thy gifts are dross.' Cut to the heart by the disappointment—for he truly loved the maiden—the young Roman went home, took to his bed, and was soon at the point of death. The physicians declared that their patient was suffering from a hopeless passion, and their skill could avail nothing. Hearing this, the Prefect cross-examined his son, who confessed that the child Agnes was the object of his love and that, unless he could win her for his bride he knew that he must die. So the Prefect went to Agnes and himself pleaded with her for the life of his boy; but she was obdurate, repeating what she had already said to her lover. At last, losing patience, the Prefect ordered her to be arrested as a Christian, and, when she refused to sacrifice to the gods, she was subjected to all manner of tortures and insults, none of which could harm her. When stripped naked, her long hair covered her like a veil; when men approached to harm her, an angel appeared beside her, guarding her from every profane touch, and the room in which she was shut up became filled with

heavenly radiance. The young Sempronius, hearing on his sick-bed of the attempts that were being made to subdue Agnes to his will, arose and came to her ; but as he approached her, her guardian angel put forth a warning hand. The unfortunate lover was at once smitten with blindness, and fell in convulsions at the feet of the maiden. He was carried home in a dying state, and his father, realizing at last how useless it was to contend against one thus aided from heaven, besought Agnes to pray for his boy, that he might be healed. She did so, and he at once recovered. After this miracle the Prefect, it is said, would gladly have saved the saintly maiden from further persecution, but it was too late : the fury of the people was aroused, and they clamoured for the death of the sorceress, who, they said, could kill and make alive with a word.

St. Agnes was condemned to be burnt to death, and tied to the stake with faggots piled around her ; but the flames, instead of burning her, slew the executioners whose business it was to keep up the fire. She was therefore beheaded, meeting her fate with joy, and with her last breath thanking God for having been with her through so many trials. Her body was buried by her parents outside the city on the Via Nomentana, where not very long afterwards, the Basilica of S. Agnese fuori le Mura was founded in memory of the martyr, by Constantine the Great. It is related that a short time after her death, when her father and mother were praying at her tomb, St. Agnes appeared to them with a lamb of snowy whiteness by her side, and said : ‘Weep not, but rejoice with exceeding joy : for me a throne is prepared by the side of Him whom on earth I preferred to all others, and to whom I am united for ever in heaven.’ On account of this vision, or because her name signifies lamb, the chief attribute in art of St. Agnes is a lamb, and it became customary in Rome to offer at her altar on her fête-day, January 21, a lamb, which was afterwards presented to the Pope. The ceremony of the blessing of the lambs still takes place on that day in S. Agnese fuori le Mura, and in the Monastery of the same name is kept a special breed of sheep, from the wool of which the archiepiscopal pallia are woven. Young girls invoke St. Agnes to insure the faithfulness of their lovers, and think that if they are betrothed on her fête-day all will go well with them. She is also supposed, though why is not known, to protect her votaries from all perils of the sea,



Alinari photo]

ST. AGNES
By Andrea del Sarto

[*Duomo, Pisa*

and she is one of the chosen patrons of the Order of Trinitarians, founded in her native city in the twelfth century for the rescue of Christians from slavery.

St. Agnes was a very favourite Saint with Italian and Spanish painters, and she is constantly introduced in devotional pictures, either kneeling with a lamb beside her or in her arms, with a lily or a palm in one hand and a book in the other, the last probably on account of her love of the Holy Scriptures, or because her name was early written in the Book of Life. More rarely she has a sword in her hand or plunged into her throat. Sometimes, as in one of Fra Angelico's many 'Coronations of the Virgin,' St. Agnes may be recognised by her long hair, covering her as with a garment, and occasionally an angel stands beside her, in allusion to the supernatural aid she received during her trial.

St. Agnes is placed between St. Eulalia and St. Agatha in the mosaic Procession of martyrs in S. Apollinare Nuovo Ravenna, in the seventh-century mosaics of S. Agnese fuori le Mura, Rome, she appears between Popes Honorius and Symmachus, and in one of the subterranean chapels beneath the comparatively modern Church of S. Agnese on the Piazza Navona, Rome, is a bas-relief by Algardi, representing her Martyrdom, which is supposed to have taken place close by, in what is now a Roman circus.

Fine single figures of this favourite Saint are the fresco by Andrea del Sarto, in the Cathedral of Pisa, that by Luini in S. Maurizio, Milan, and the rare engraving by Martin Schönauer, in which she is represented wearing a crown of olive, and with her long hair flowing down her shoulders.

In Fra Angelico's 'Coronation of the Virgin,' now in the Louvre, the group of Saints Agnes and Catherine is especially beautiful; in Titian's 'Madonna and Child,' in the same collection, St. Agnes is offering her palm to the Infant Saviour; in the 'Enthroned Madonna' by Paolo Veronese, in the Venice Academy, she is presenting a nun to the Blessed Virgin; in El Greco's 'Virgin and Child in Glory' in S. José, Toledo, she appears with her lamb on her knees; and in Tintoretto's 'Paradiso,' in the Doge's Palace, Venice, she stands near the patriarchs Abraham and Isaac.

Amongst the many renderings of the Martyrdom of St. Agnes, none are better known than the terribly realistic painting by

Domenichino, in the Bologna Academy; that by Vicente Joannes, in the Prado Gallery, Madrid; and the two interpretations of the same subject by Tintoretto, one in the Academy, the other in the Church of S. Maria dell' Orto, Venice, which also contains a fine representation of the so-called 'Miracle of St. Agnes,' by the same master, in which the maiden Saint is seen restoring to life the son of the Prefect of Rome.

During her protracted trial, St. Agnes is said to have been closely attended by her young foster-sister, St. Emerantiana, who reproached the executioners for their barbarity. No special notice was taken of her at the time, but it is related that a few days after the martyrdom, when she was praying at the grave of the victim, some of the heathen, whose anger she had aroused against her by her conduct at the execution of her friend, gathered about her and stoned her to death. She was, it is added, only a catechumen at the time, but the Christians said she was baptized in her own blood, and she is now accounted a Saint in the Roman Catholic Church. She is sometimes associated with St. Agnes in works of art, and may be recognised by the stones she holds in her lap.

Very poetic is the legend told of St. Dorothea, a noble maiden of Cesarea, who was martyred, it is supposed, about the same time as Saints Lucy, Agnes, and Emerantiana. Accused of being a Christian, she was brought before the Governor Fabricius, who was famed for the ingenuity of the tortures he inflicted on his prisoners. Dorothea was, however, so lovely that even his hard heart was touched by her beauty, and he longed to rescue her and marry her. Instead of ordering her to be torn on the rack, therefore, he had her shut up in a dungeon, and instructed two apostate women to go to her, promising them a great reward if they could persuade her to recant. The result was very unexpected, for St. Dorothea, instead of yielding to their arguments, made them so ashamed of their own weakness that they returned to the true faith themselves. When they left her they went back to the Governor, telling him that they were Christians once more, and were ready to die for their faith. Enraged against them for their failure, Fabricius condemned them to be burnt to death, and St. Dorothea was sent for to witness the sufferings she had brought upon them. Undismayed even by this terrible ordeal, the saintly maiden stood beside the martyrs

to the end, encouraging them to persevere, and assuring them that their transient pangs would be followed by the joys of eternal life.

When the poor women were dead, Fabricius gave St. Dorothea one more chance of saving herself by sacrificing to the gods, promising her a life of happiness with him if she would yield, but she resisted all temptations, declaring that she would be the bride of none but Christ, in whose garden grew celestial fruits and roses that would never fade. Worn out at last by the young girl's obstinacy, the Governor ordered her to be first tortured and then beheaded. She received the sentence with joy, and after being stretched on the rack and torn with pincers, she was led forth from the city to be beheaded. As she passed through the streets of Cesarea on her way to death, a young man named Theophilus came out from the crowd and cried out to her derisively: 'Ha, ha, fair maiden! goest thou to join thy bridegroom? I pray thee send me some of the fruits and flowers from His garden, for I would fain taste them.' To this taunt St. Dorothea, meekly bowing her beautiful head, replied: 'Thy request is granted, O Theophilus!' At which he turned to his gay companions to share the good joke with them, and they all laughed heartily over it.

When the place of execution was reached, St. Dorothea knelt down to receive her death-blow, and just before the end all present saw standing beside her a beautiful boy with gleaming golden hair, who held in his hand a basket containing some fine apples and roses. When St. Dorothea saw them, she knew that her prayer for the conversion of the scoffer had been answered, and she said to the heavenly messenger: 'Take the basket to Theophilus; say that Dorothea sent them before she went to the garden whence they came, where she will await his coming.'

The angel obeyed, and found Theophilus still surrounded by his friends, and gloating over the grim joke he had made. Great indeed was the astonishment of all at the apparition, and when the messenger placed the basket in the hands of the young lawyer, telling him what St. Dorothea had said, a great silence fell upon them all. They were eager to question the boy, but he disappeared directly his duty was done, and Theophilus, touched to the heart by the miracle, proclaimed

himself a Christian. He is said to have been beheaded soon afterwards, meeting his fate with quiet heroism.

St. Dorothea, who is the patron Saint of young lovers, of gardeners, and, strange to say, of brewers, though why is not known, is generally represented crowned with flowers, and with flowers in her lap or in her hands. Sometimes an angel stands beside her, holding a basket of fruit and flowers; an incident of her legend referred to in Passau Breviary (Venice, 1321) in the following quaint Latin lines:

‘Paradisi de veridasio
Rosas mittis notario,
Quem mortis cum salario
Cceli jungis sacrario,’ etc.*

In certain old calendars February 6, the fête-day of St. Dorothea, is marked with an apple and a pair of pincers, in joint allusion to the martyred maiden's sufferings and triumph. The beautiful legend of St. Dorothea inspired the well-known tragedy of Massinger, ‘The Virgin Martyr,’ in which the romance of the situation is heightened by making Antonius the son of Fabricius, the lover of the young girl, whose last prayer for him is that the ‘affection in which he languishes to death may be changed to the love of heaven.’

In the sacristy of the Cathedral of Aix-la-Chapelle is a quaint old painting of St. Dorothea, with a basket of flowers on her knees and a bunch of roses in her right hand; and an anonymous engraving of her, dated 1418, is preserved in the Brussels Museum. In some devotional pictures, as in one by Israel van Melen, she is introduced on one side of the Enthroned Madonna, or she kneels below, offering her basket of flowers to the Holy Child. In the so-called S. Gemignano Altar-piece by Francia, now in the Berlin Gallery, she stands, with St. Catherine, in the centre of the principal scene; in a painting by Carlo Dolci, in the Darmstadt Gallery, an angel is bringing her a basket of flowers; and in a fine picture by Van Dyck she holds a palm as well as her roses. The Martyrdom of St. Dorothea is the subject of a dramatic com-

* ‘From the green fields of Paradise
Roses to the lawyer dost thou send,
Where by him thou shalt be joined
When he, too, the reward of death hath won.’

Caswell Smith photo

[Collection of A. E. Street

THE MARTYRDOM OF ST. DOROTHEA

By Sir Edward Burne-Jones



position at Brescia, by Jacopo Ligozzi, in which angels are introduced hovering above the kneeling maiden, with garlands of roses in their hands, whilst Fabricius and his attendants are looking on. An extremely fine modern rendering of the legend of the roses is that by Sir Edward Burne-Jones, in private possession, in which the angel approaches Theophilus with a basket of flowers and fruit, as he stands watching the removal of the dead body of the martyr.

In spite of the great and widespread veneration in which St. Catherine of Alexandria is held, very little is really known about her. She is, however, supposed to have been of noble, some say of royal, birth, the daughter of Costis, son of Constantine Chlorus, the father of Constantine the Great, and to have been one of the most learned women of her time, able to hold her own in argument with the far-famed philosophers of Egypt, many of whom she won over to Christianity. Whether she was brought up as a Christian or early converted to the faith is uncertain, but it is related that her mother, Sabinella, who was Queen of Egypt in her own right, dreamt that the child to be born to her should be raised to great glory, and when the little one arrived she had a gleaming aureole about her head. King Costis, who loved his daughter greatly, had her instructed in all the wisdom of the day, and when he died left her heiress of all he possessed, though she was but fourteen years old at the time. The orphaned Catherine was crowned Queen of Egypt without opposition, although, apparently, her mother, Queen Sabinella, was still living. The people of Egypt naturally wished their young monarch to marry, that an heir to the kingdom might be born, but nothing was further from her intentions, and she told her nobles, when they suggested that she should choose a husband, that she had resolved to remain single all her life. They explained to her that this was impossible, for it was her duty to marry a prince who could aid her in the government of her country, command the army in case of war, and be in every sense worthy of her own noble birth, wisdom, and beauty.

This persistency greatly troubled Queen Catherine, but she proved her knowledge of human nature by seeming to yield to the pressure put upon her, promising that if a man could be found possessing certain notable gifts she would marry him. 'He that shall be my husband and lord of my heart,' she said, 'must

be so endowed that all creatures shall have need of him, but he shall have need of none. He shall be of such noble blood that all men shall worship him; so great that I shall never be reminded that he owes his position to me; so rich that he shall own more than all others; so beautiful that the very angels of God shall long to behold him; and so loving that he can forgive every offence against him.'

Surprised at such an address from the young girl they had expected to be able to manage easily, the nobles consulted together, when all agreed that such a hero as the Queen had described had never existed, and that to search for him would be a mere waste of time. Queen Sabinella was appealed to, and she said to St. Catherine, 'Alas, my daughter! where are you likely to find such a husband?' To which the young girl replied, 'If I do not find him, he shall find me; for other husband will I none.'

As a result of this obstinacy, the situation at the Court of Alexandria became very strained, and there was much murmuring amongst the people. Presently, however, there arrived in the city a holy hermit, who, according to one version of the legend, was really St. Luke the Evangelist himself.

Declaring that he was charged with an important mission to the Queen, the holy man asked for a private interview with her. It was granted, for it was hoped that he might be the emissary of some noble suitor, and the stranger then told the young ruler that there did exist such an one as she had described in her speech to her courtiers. The Virgin Mary, he added, had appeared to him in a dream, and told him that her Son, who was Himself the King of Glory, the Lord of heaven and earth, would accept Queen Catherine as His bride. The hermit then showed to the astonished maiden a picture of the Virgin Mother and her Divine Child, at the sight of which St. Catherine's heart was at once filled with love and reverence for them. She bade the hermit leave the picture with her, and, forgetting all else, gazed upon it continually. The next night she, in her turn, dreamed a wonderful dream, in which she seemed to wander forth from her city with the hermit, till she came to a gleaming temple on the summit of a high mountain. The two paused when they reached the gateway, and from it issued forth an escort of angels, clothed in white,

who bade Queen Catherine welcome, and took her through many antechambers full of winged attendants in shining garments, till they came to an inner sanctuary, where stood the Mother of the Lord with her glorious Son, surrounded by a great host of worshippers. Taking St. Catherine by the hand, one of the angels led her to the feet of the Blessed Virgin, who received her graciously, and in her turn presented her to Christ, saying, 'This is thy servant Catherine, who for Thy love hath given up all earthly joys.' To the trembling maiden's bitter grief, however, the Lord turned away His head with the words, 'She is not fair enough for Me.'

Here a burst of weeping woke the Queen, and the vision faded away, but the first thing the next morning she sent for the hermit, begging him to tell her how she should become worthy of the heavenly bridegroom to whom she had now given her whole heart. The holy man told her she must become a Christian and be baptized. She listened eagerly to his instructions, and ere long was admitted into the Church, in spite of all the opposition of her nobles and people. On the night after her baptism a new and yet more wonderful vision was vouchsafed to her. The Blessed Virgin and her Son, with a noble company of angels, appeared to her, and the Redeemer with a smile of ineffable beauty, telling her she was now beautiful enough for Him, placed a ring of betrothal upon her finger. When St. Catherine awoke, the ring is said to have been still there, leaving her in no possible doubt as to the reality of the marvellous experience.

Of course, after this all efforts to induce the Queen to marry were in vain, but she ruled her kingdom with such wisdom that, in spite of her disregard of their wishes, her people became deeply attached to her. She might, perhaps, have won the whole of Egypt to her own faith, had not the Emperor Maximianus come to Alexandria for a time with the determination to exterminate all the Christians. Many were arrested, tortured, and executed, although Queen Catherine herself pleaded their cause with the tyrant. Maximianus is said to have fallen in love with her at first sight, and to have paid court to her, although he was already married. Finding her proof against all his flatteries, however, he became enraged against her, and, hoping to put her to public shame, he

challenged her to argue out in public, with several of the most learned scholars of the day, the points in dispute between the Christians and the heathen. St. Catherine, nothing daunted, disputed so eloquently that all her opponents were vanquished, many of them being converted on the spot, including, some say, the celebrated philosopher Porphyry, one of the most bitter writers against the Christians of his time.

Finding gentle measures of no avail against this rarely-gifted maiden, Maximianus now resorted to violence, and, strange to say, in spite of her royal dignity, no efforts appear to have been made by her subjects to save their Queen from imprisonment and torture. She was not, however, left unaided : angels ministered to her in prison, and the Empress herself, who went to visit her, hoping, perhaps, to find her rival in her husband's affections dead or dying, was won over to the true faith. Glad of an excuse to get rid of his wife, Maximianus condemned her and all the other converts to be put to death, after which he renewed his courtship of St. Catherine, promising to make her Empress if she would recant. Needless to add that she indignantly refused, upbraiding her suitor with his crimes, and declaring herself eager to die and be with Christ. Then the Emperor vowed that he would find some death for her to die more terrible than any ever yet inflicted, and he commanded that four wheels, each studded with sharply-pointed knives, should be constructed in such a manner that two should revolve one way and two the other. To this horrible machine St. Catherine was bound, and the signal to set it in motion was given by Maximianus himself ; but at that very moment fire fell from heaven, the ropes were sundered, and the wheels, breaking into hundreds of pieces, struck the executioners, killing some and wounding others. Even this wonderful deliverance did not touch the hard heart of the Emperor ; he merely gave orders that the rescued maiden should be taken outside the city and beheaded. As usual, no supernatural intervention prevented the carrying out of this legal sentence, but it is said that after the head of the patient sufferer had been severed from her body, angels came and replaced it, drawing the beautiful hair over the wound. They then carried the martyr to Mount Sinai, where they reverently buried her, on the spot above which a beautiful monastery was erected by St. Helena in the eighth century. Some are of opinion, however, that



Montabone photo]

[*Poldi-Pezzoli Gallery, Milan*

THE MARRIAGE OF ST. CATHERINE

By Bernardino Luini

To face p. 92

St. Catherine was buried where she died, her remains having been translated to the monastery, where they are still reverently preserved in a marble sarcophagus.

St. Catherine of Alexandria is one of the fourteen auxiliary Saints of Germany, amongst whom she is generally grouped with St. Barbara. She is the patron Saint of unmarried women, especially, in spite of her royal dignity, of girls in domestic service; she is supposed to look after the interests of orators and philosophers, because of the public disputation she held with the learned men of her time; and wheelwrights, millers, and makers of pottery, all appeal to her for aid, on account of a wheel having been the chief instrument of torture used at her martyrdom.

The wheel is, of course, the most constant symbol associated in art with the martyred Queen of Egypt. This wheel is sometimes represented broken, and occasionally, as in a painting by a follower of Giotto, in private possession, the Saint stands between two wheels. In some old calendars a small wheel, set with spikes, marks November 25, the day sacred to St. Catherine. In many paintings she wears a similar wheel as an ornament round her neck, or a wheel is embroidered on the back of a book she is reading. The sword, in allusion to the manner of her death, the martyr's palm, the crown, in token of her royal rank, and a book, on account of her learning, are also given to St. Catherine. Occasionally, as in an old window in West Wickham Church, in a quaint old sculpture in Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster, and in a sixteenth-century German group, also in wood, which was amongst the recent bequests to the French nation of Baron Adolphe de Rothschild, a prostrate figure is introduced at the feet of the martyr, said to represent one of the philosophers whom she worsted in argument, or the Emperor Maximianus, whose addresses she repudiated with scorn. Now and then angels are seen near to St. Catherine, breaking the wheel to which she is bound, or a dove hovers above her head, in allusion to the supernatural aid she received during her trial, and sometimes the hermit of the legend, or St. Luke, appears beside her, the latter showing her his portrait of the Blessed Virgin and her Divine Son.

St. Catherine is one of the Saints whose bodies are supposed to emit a miraculous balm, and amongst the post-Com-

munion prayers in an old Alsatian missal occurs the following remarkable petition : ‘ Sumptis, Domine, salutis æternæ mysteriis, te suppliciter deprecamur ut sicut liquor qui de membris beatæ Catherinæ virginis et martyris tuæ jugiter manat, languidorum corpora sanat ; sic ejus oratio cunctas a nobis iniquitates expellat. Per D. N. J. C.’*

Amongst the most beautiful of the many single figures of St. Catherine of Alexandria are the painting by Raphael, in the National Gallery, London; that by Andrea del Sarto, in the Cathedral of Pisa; and that by Correggio, in which the holy maiden is represented reading, now in Hampton Court Palace. Very beautiful, too, are those by Titian and Ghirlandajo, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, and that by Luini, in S. Maurizio, Milan. The character of the martyred Queen has also been ably interpreted in many celebrated devotional pictures. In the Altar-piece known as the ‘ Madonna del Rosario,’ by Sassoferato, in S. Sabina, Rome, she appears with St. Dominic; in the ‘ Madonna and Saints’ by Paolo Veronese, in S. Francesco della Vigna, Venice, her seated figure is remarkably effective; in the same subject by Giovanni Bellini, in S. Zaccaria, Venice, she is grouped with St. Peter on the left of the Enthroned Virgin; in the ‘ Sacra Conversazione’ by Pordenone, in the Pitti Gallery, Florence, she kneels in adoration of the Holy Child; in the Virgin and Saints by Filippo Lippi in S. Spirito, Florence, and in Fra Angelico’s ‘ Coronation of the Virgin’ in the Louvre, the figure of St. Catherine is especially beautiful. In the ‘ Madonna Enthroned’ by Andrea del Sarto in the Berlin Museum, the martyred maiden kneels by her broken wheel; in Botticelli’s ‘ Madonna with two Seraphs,’ in the Academy, Florence, she is grouped with Saints Barnabas, John the Evangelist, and Ambrose; in Sebastiano del Piombo’s ‘ St. John Chrysostom,’ in S. Giovanni Crisostomo, she appears with Saints Agnes and Mary Magdalene. Andrea del Sarto introduced her in his fine ‘ Pieta,’ now in the Pitti Gallery, Florence, in which she kneels behind the Magdalene at the foot of the dead Christ. In Titian’s celebrated ‘ Cornaro Family,’ now in the Alnwick collection, the

* O Lord, now that the mysteries of eternal salvation have been shown forth, we, Thy humble suppliants, beseech Thee, that even as the balm flowing from the limbs of St. Catherine, Thy Virgin and Martyr, heals the bodies of the sick, so may her prayers preserve us from all ill.



Anderson photo]

[*Appartamenti Borgia, Vatican, Rome*

ST. CATHERINE DISPUTING WITH THE WISE MEN

By Pinturicchio

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unfortunate Catherine, Queen of Cyprus, is represented as St. Catherine of Alexandria, and in the 'Madonna and Child with St. Catherine,' by Palma Vecchio, in the Vienna Gallery, the artist has taken his own lovely daughter as the model for the martyred Saint.

The mystic Marriage of St. Catherine was a very favourite subject with German, Flemish, and Italian artists. One of the very earliest copperplate engravings, by the anonymous 'Master of 1466,' represents the ceremony as taking place in heaven, at the foot of the throne of the Virgin, who is about to place a wreath of roses, handed to her by St. Dorothea, on the head of the kneeling St. Catherine, beside whom stands the bridegroom, a child of five or six years old, who places the ring on the finger of His bride. Round about this central group stand other martyred maidens, and in the background is a choir of angels, whilst above hovers the dove of the Holy Spirit.

The same subject was chosen for two of his fine altarpieces by Hans Memlinc, one of which is now in the Hospital of St. John at Bruges, and the other in the possession of Mr. Bodley, A.R.A. At Antwerp is an oil-painting by Rubens, representing the Marriage as taking place in the presence of Saints Peter and Paul, with a large audience of angels. In the Academy of Venice is a remarkable rendering of the same theme by Lucas van Leyden, in which the bride wears a crown; in the Royal Collection of England is a beautiful 'Marriage of St. Catherine,' by Van Dyck, in which the Blessed Virgin is about to place a crown upon the head of the Saint, as she receives the marriage-ring from her Divine suitor; and Luini, Correggio, Fra Bartolommeo and other Italian masters have also done full justice to the favourite theme.

St. Catherine arguing with the philosophers in the presence of the Emperor and his Court has also been many times represented, the finest rendering, perhaps, being the great fresco by Pinturicchio, in the Appartamenti Borgia of the Vatican. In it the Saint appears as a lovely girl of about sixteen, with a face full of more than human wisdom, standing in her royal robes opposite to Maximianus on his throne, whom she appears to be addressing, whilst the scholars and other spectators listen to her in enthralled astonishment.

Other celebrated pictures of scenes from the legend of St. Catherine are the 'Rescue from the Torture of the Wheel' by Gaudenzio Ferrari, in the Brera Gallery, Milan, in which an angel is seen with a drawn sword in his hand rushing down to the aid of the sufferer; the 'Beheading of the Saint' by Aretino Spinelli in the Berlin Gallery, in which St. Catherine is kneeling to receive her death-blow in the foreground, whilst above angels are seen carrying her body over the sea, and in the distance it is being placed in a tomb on the top of a hill; the fresco by Luini in the Brera Gallery, Milan, in which three angels are about to lay their sacred burden in an ornate tomb; and the series of scenes in fresco from the life of the martyred maiden by Masaccio, in the Church of S. Clemente, Rome, beginning with her refusal to offer incense to idols, and ending with her burial by angels.

In one of the fine stained-glass windows in the Cathedral of Angers, various episodes from the life of St. Catherine are given, the burial scene differing from other representations of it, for the severed head is not restored to its place, but held in a napkin by one of the three angels, who watches the other two lowering the body into the tomb. In the east window of St. Margaret's, Westminster, St. Catherine of Alexandria is introduced above Catherine of Aragon, and Sir Edward Burne-Jones has taken the legend of St. Catherine as his leading motive in the beautiful window in Christchurch Cathedral, Oxford, in memory of Edith Liddell, who died five days after her betrothal. The martyred maiden wearing her crown occupies the central light, having on one side an angel, with a flaming wheel at her feet, typical of suffering patiently borne, and on the other, an angel typical of Divine deliverance from pain, crushing the wheel and extinguishing the flames; In the lower lights are represented the Dispute with the Philosophers, the 'Dream in which the Blessed Virgin leads the maiden into the presence of Christ,' and the 'Burial of the martyr by angels.' In the choir of the same church is a quaint figure of very early date of St. Catherine, holding the remains of a sword in one hand, and a piece of a wheel in the other; and in the Lady Chapel of Lichfield Cathedral is a fine modern statue of the martyr treading on a dragon, and holding her sword and wheel.

In England the fête-day of St. Catherine, November 25,



Autotype Co. photo]

THE BURIAL OF ST. CATHERINE

By Bernardino Luini

[*Brera Gallery, Milan*]

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was long kept as a public holiday, and passages from her 'Acts' used to be read in all Roman Catholic churches. There are, perhaps, more churches and chapels dedicated to her in the British Isles than to any other Saint, and her name has been given to many features of natural scenery, especially in the South of England. Near to Ventnor, in the Isle of Wight, alone are St. Catherine's Point, St. Catherine's Beacon, and St. Catherine's Downs; and a mile from Christchurch, Hants, is St. Catherine's Hill. The Catherine Wheel was long a favourite sign with inn-keepers, although after the Reformation, an attempt was made by Protestants to change it into the Cat and Wheel. In fact, the romantic story of the more or less apocryphal maiden has taken a remarkably strong hold on the popular imagination, and even in some English churches dedicated to St. Catherine, a banner bearing her effigy leaning on her wheel is carried round in procession on the great feast-days, although her example was scarcely one which it would be desirable for the young girls of the present day to follow.

CHAPTER VIII

OTHER MARTYRED WOMEN OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

OTHER noble women, less celebrated than Saints Lucy, Agnes, Dorothea, and Catherine, but probably no less worthy, who suffered martyrdom in the fourth century, were Saints Euphemia of Chalcedon, Julietta of Iconium, Afra of Augsburg, Justa and Rufina of Seville, Lucia and Bibiana of Rome, and Justina of Padua, with whom, as constantly represented in art, must also be named St. Christina of Bolsena, though her legend has now been rejected by the Roman Catholic Church.

Of the life of St. Euphemia no absolute facts are known, and her fame rests principally upon a sermon preached on her fête-day, September 16, by Bishop Asterius of Amasea in Pontus, who, alluding to a picture, now lost, but then a treasure of the chief church of Chalcedon, made the following remarks :

'We see her in this picture . . . in the dark-brown mantle
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worn in Greece by philosophers, and typical of their renunciation of all worldly pleasures . . . we see her brought before the judge Priscus by two soldiers . . . and in another part of the picture tortured by two executioners, one of whom drags back her head by her long hair, whilst the other strikes her in the mouth with a wooden mallet, causing the blood to flow. . . . In the background is seen the interior of a dungeon. St. Euphemia, seated on the ground, raises her eyes to heaven. Above her head a cross appears . . . and near the prison a pile of faggots is kindled, in the midst of which stands the beautiful and courageous martyr.'

Tradition has supplemented this account with many thrilling details. When the beautiful maiden was in prison, Satan himself is said to have come to tempt her, threatening to kill her then and there if she would not yield to him; but she routed him by reciting the Angelic Salutation; when she was bound to the stake the flames made a glory around her, but did her no harm; when she was bound to wheels, in the same manner as St. Catherine had been, an angel broke her bonds; when she was flung to the lions, they only licked her hands and feet. At last, Priscus, worn out with her constancy and the perpetual interference from heaven, rushed upon her, sword in hand, and himself plunged it into her bosom. According to another version of her story, St. Euphemia, when in the amphitheatre, prayed to God to put an end to her sufferings, and a bear at once killed her with one snap of his teeth, crouching reverently beside the body immediately afterwards.

St. Euphemia, who for some unexplained reason is the patron of theologians, is occasionally introduced in devotional pictures, as in one by Marco Oggione, in the church named after her at Milan, in which she is being presented to the Enthroned Virgin by St. John the Baptist; and in another by Simone Cantarini, in the Bologna Gallery, in which she stands with her lion beside her, beneath the Madonna in glory, at whom she is pointing. As a rule, she wears a crown on her head, holds a lily in one hand and a palm in the other, and has a cross embroidered on her robes, in allusion to the apparition of the cross in her prison.

The story of St. Julietta of Iconium is peculiarly touching. She was a young wife, dwelling happily with her husband and their one little son, of three years old, named Cyricus,

when she was accused of being a Christian. She fled from her native town with her child and two women servants to Seleucia, hoping to remain there in safety until the fierceness of the persecution should abate. Unfortunately, however, she was again arrested, and taken before the Governor, Alexander, with her boy in her arms. All attempts to make her recant having failed, she was condemned to be tortured on the rack. Alexander ordered the guards to give Cyricus to him, and when the poor child had with difficulty been torn from his mother's arms, he took him on his knee and tried to comfort him. It was, of course, in vain. Every time he heard his mother cry, 'I am a Christian!' Cyricus echoed her words, stretching out his little arms to her, and struggling to go to her. Presently the inhuman judge lost patience, and dashed the child to the ground with such violence that he was killed on the spot. Julietta, now that her child was dead, cared less than ever to preserve her own life, and after suffering terrible things at the hands of her persecutors she was beheaded. Her servants, who had fled when she was arrested, came by night and buried her and her little one side by side without the city, and after the conversion of Constantine the spot was identified. Portions of the relics were later translated to Nevers, Toulouse, and other Continental towns, in which the memory of the martyred mother and son are still held specially sacred. It is related that St. Cyricus rescued the Emperor Charlemagne from being killed by a boar near Nevers. The enraged animal was just about to slay the Emperor, who had got separated from his companions, when a beautiful nude boy suddenly appeared, jumped upon the boar, and, holding it by its tusks, led it to the Emperor, who slew it with his spear. The incident is commemorated in the arms of the Cathedral of Nevers, and also in those of the Collegiate Church of Issundun, St. Cyricus being represented holding the boar by the tusks, whilst Charlemagne stands by, spear in hand.

Saints Julietta and Cyricus often appear in art amongst other martyrs, each with a palm, the little boy clasped in his mother's arms, and looking up to heaven with a charming expression of devotion. A crown and sceptre are sometimes placed at the feet of St. Julietta, in allusion to her supposed royal birth, and now and then a boar appears beside her.

The memory of the martyred mother and child is held dear even in England, especially in the south-west, where several churches are dedicated to them.

St. Afra of Augsburg is said to have led an evil life, and to have been converted to Christianity by a priest named Narcissus, who took refuge in her house from his persecutors, not knowing who she was. Later she confessed her past sins to him, and he gave her absolution, assuring her that Christ rejected none who were truly penitent. When the retreat of the priest was discovered, St. Afra saved him at the risk of her own life, and, whilst he made good his escape, she was dragged before the judge, who was greatly astonished when she proclaimed herself a Christian. He asked her how she could expect to be accepted by the God of her fellow-worshippers, and she replied: 'I know I am unworthy, but He who did not turn away from Mary Magdalene when she washed His feet with her tears, will not refuse to receive me.' All efforts to shake her faith having failed, she was condemned to be burnt alive, and died at the stake, praying aloud until the end. Her mother and three of her handmaidens whom she had converted, were, it is said, martyred in a similar manner soon afterwards, but not until they had reverently interred the remains of St. Afra outside the city.

St. Afra, to whom penitent sinners appeal for aid, is sometimes grouped in German devotional pictures with her fellow-patron of Augsburg, St. Ulrich, who was Bishop of that city in the tenth century. In the Cathedral of Augsburg is an Altarpiece by Christopher Amberger, in which her Martyrdom at the stake is painted on one wing and St. Ulrich, in full Bishop's robes, appears on the other, whilst in the predella beneath St. Narcissus is grouped with the mother and three handmaidens of St. Afra.

Saints Justa and Rufina, who are little known out of Spain, were makers of pottery at Seville, of whom it is related that one day, when they were selling their wares in the market, the image of the goddess Salambo, supposed to be the same as the Astarte of the Greeks and Romans, was carried by. The priestesses, as their custom was, asked all in their path for an offering for the divinity, but Justa and Rufina, who had been converted to Christianity, refused to give anything. They were therefore arrested, and in the end martyred, but how is not

stated. They have been several times represented by Spanish masters, notably by Murillo, and may be recognised by the pottery always introduced beside them.

St. Lucia of Rome is said to have been a lady of noble birth, who was converted to Christianity after the death of her husband, and was denounced to the authorities by her own son when she was at a very advanced age. Refusing to recant, she was publicly scourged, but an earthquake put an end to the torture, and the Temple of Jupiter fell in ruins at her feet. Later she was flung into a caldron of boiling pitch, but it failed to harm her, and she was then dragged through the streets of Rome to be flung into prison. Amongst the crowd looking on at her sufferings was a young man named Gemianus, who was, it is related, converted in a very remarkable way. A dove circled round his head, making him look up, and he saw heaven opened above him, with angels waiting to receive the soul of St. Lucia. Convinced at once that the faith she professed was the true one, he hastened after her, and was imprisoned with her. At the same time an angel is said to have appeared to a priest in Rome, and to have told him to go and baptize Gemianus. The next day the old lady and the new convert were both beheaded, for which reason, when introduced with other martyrs in works of art, they are generally grouped together.

St. Bibiana of Rome was one of a family of Christians, all of whom were martyred about 363 A.D. by order of the Governor Apronianus, who accused them of having by their magical arts caused him to lose the sight of one of his eyes. St. Flavian, the father, after being cruelly tortured, was banished, and died of his wounds. St. Dafrosa, his wife, was beheaded ; whilst St. Bibiana and her young sister, Demetria, were shut up in their home for many days without food, and when weakened by fasting were brought before Apronianus for trial. Demetria, after refusing to recant, fell down dead at the feet of the judge, but St. Bibiana was reserved for a more terrible fate. She was bound to a pillar and beaten to death with leaden ropes. Her body was then flung without the city to be devoured by wild beasts ; but it was secretly buried by a priest named John, and a little church was built by a Christian lady called Olympia to mark the resting-place of the saint, enclosing within it the column to which the martyred girl had been bound,

and of which a portion is still preserved. Rebuilt in 1625 by Bernini under Pope Urban VIII., the walls of the new church were adorned with frescoes of scenes from the life of St. Bibiana by Pietro da Cortona and others, and above the high altar was placed a fine marble statue by the architect.

The chief attribute of St. Bibiana in art is a branch of a tree with many twigs, supposed to represent the scourge used at her execution, which is occasionally replaced by a truer rendering of a leaded rope. Occasionally she holds a dagger, for, according to one account, she was stabbed to death at the last, and she is generally grouped with her father, mother, and sister. Greatly venerated in Italy and in Germany, she is appealed to for aid, possibly because her name signifies the drinker, by habitual drunkards, and also, though why it is impossible to explain, by sufferers from epilepsy.

St. Justina of Padua is said to have been of royal birth, and to have been brought up as a Christian by her father. On his death she was accused of belonging to the hated sect, and dragged before the Emperor, who ordered her to be stabbed. She received the sentence gladly, and was killed at one blow from the executioner's sword, which pierced her heart. According to another version of her story, her sad fate was the result of her refusal to receive the addresses of the Governor of Rome, who slew her in revenge for his disappointment, and a stone was long shown in Venice said to preserve the marks made by her knees as she prayed to Heaven for protection from her ardent suitor.

In allusion to the chastity of St. Justina, a unicorn is sometimes introduced beside her, for the reason already explained in connection with her namesake of Antioch, and she generally holds a dagger or a sword, in allusion to the manner of her death. She is greatly honoured in Padua and Venice. Her effigy was stamped on the coinage of the latter city under the Doges Leonardo Donato and Pasquale Cicogna and she is introduced in many devotional pictures wearing rich robes, and with the martyr's palm in her hand. In the fifth century the beautiful Church of S. Giustina at Padua was built in her honour above the catacomb containing her remains with those of other martyrs, and at the beginning of the sixteenth century it was restored by the Benedictines, who had chosen St. Justina as their patron. In the choir of the new building



S. JUSTINA DE BOROMEIS

[Galleria Bagati-Valsecchi, Milan]

ST. JUSTINA

By Alvise Vivarini

is a shrine enriched with sculptured scenes from the life of the martyred girl, and above the high altar is a fine oil-painting by Paolo Veronese representing her Martyrdom. There is a very good single figure of St. Justina by Alvise Vivarini in the Bagati-Valsecchi Gallery, Milan, in which the martyred girl, the sword piercing her heart, seems about to step out of the picture. She holds a palm in one hand and a closed book in the other.

In the frescoes by Bernardino Luini, on the eastern wall in S. Maurizio, Milan, she is introduced with St. Ursula or St. Dorothea, and in the great picture commemorative of the Battle of Lepanto by Tintoretto, in the Sala del Collegio of the Doge's Palace, Venice, St. Justina and St. Mark are presenting an allegorical figure of the City of the Lagoons to the Enthroned Virgin.

The legend of St. Christina of Sweden—now, as already stated, generally repudiated—is to the effect that she was the daughter of a Roman patrician named Urbanus, and was converted to Christianity in early girlhood. Her home was full of beautiful idols in silver and gold, and it often grieved her loving heart to think how much use the material of which they were made might be to the poor and suffering. One day, in the absence of her father, she could resist the temptation no longer, but broke up the images of the gods and distributed the pieces to the Christians who came to her for help. They departed, overjoyed at her generosity, carrying, one the head of a Jupiter, another that of a Venus, and so on. When Urbanus returned, he was not unnaturally enraged at the destruction of his property, and ordered his daughter to be scourged. This was done, and St. Christina, bleeding from her wounds, was flung into a dark dungeon, where angels visited her, healed her with a touch, and promised to keep her courage good to the end. Finding her still obdurate in refusing to recant her errors, or express regret for her destruction of the idols, her father had her further tortured, and finally, as she was not yet quite dead, to be thrown into the sea with a millstone round her neck. Yet again she was rescued by messengers from on high, who removed the millstone, clothed the suffering girl in shining white raiment, and led her back to Urbanus. The father, thinking himself the victim of magic, now endeavoured to have his obstinate child burnt to death, and

when that failed she was given a chance of life if she would sacrifice to idols. She was taken to the Temple of Jupiter, but directly she entered it the image of the god fell to the ground at her feet and was broken to pieces, which so terrified her father that he died on the spot. His cruel work was however carried on by his successor, Julian, who had St. Christina's tongue cut out, but she continued to sing the praises of the Redeemer all the same. She was then given over to venomous reptiles, who would do her no harm, and finally her beautiful body was bound to a post to be shot at with arrows by the Roman soldiers, until at last the pure spirit was released, angels receiving it and bearing it to heaven.

The most constant attribute in art of St. Christina is a mill-stone, suspended round her neck on a rope, but she also sometimes holds an arrow in one hand and a book in the other, as in a quaint old painting engraved in the 'Acta Sanctorum,' in which the Lake of Bolsena, the furnace, and the tower in which the Saint was shut up, are all introduced, whilst three cherubim on clouds, with the triangle, the symbol of the Holy Trinity, above them, appear in one corner. Occasionally, as in an engraving reproduced by Père Cahier in his 'Caractéristiques des Saints,' the martyred maiden has a small serpent coiled round her wrist, and she, of course, generally has the martyr's crown and palm.

In the eleventh-century church at Bolsena, founded in honour of St. Christina, and named after her, her tomb is shown, and in a museum connected with the church is a sixteenth-century terra-cotta statue of her.

In the Bologna Gallery is a painting by the little-known Jacopo Avanzi, representing St. Christina bound to a tree, with two soldiers aiming arrows at her, whilst the judge looks on; and in the Venice Academy are preserved four out of ten scenes from her legend, painted by Paolo Veronese for the Church of S. Antonio Torcello, these four being the 'Confession and Martyrdom,' the 'Flagellation,' the 'Visit of the Angels to the Saint in Prison,' and the 'Refusal to sacrifice to Idols.' In the Munich Gallery is a beautiful representation of St. Christina in the dress of the sixteenth century, resting one hand on her millstone, and holding a palm in the other; and in the Church of S. Maria Mater Domini, Venice, is an exceptionally interesting composition by Vincenzio Catena,



[*National Gallery, London*
MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH ST. CHRISTINA AND OTHER SAINTS
By Luca Signorelli

in which angels are seen upholding the millstone above the lake, and Christ Himself is giving one of the heavenly messengers a white robe in which to clothe the rescued girl. St. Christina is also sometimes introduced in some Madonna pictures, notably in one by Luca Signorelli, now in the Mariani collection at Citta di Castello, in which she wears a very formidable-looking millstone hanging down her back.

Another maiden martyr of the fourth or fifth century was St. Julia of Corsica, who is sometimes represented bound to a cross, or clasping a crucifix in her hands. It is related of her that when Carthage was taken by Genseric she was sold as a slave to a heathen merchant of Syria, whose affections she won by her noble and consistent conduct. Although he respected her resolve never to marry, he took her with him wherever he went, and it was when travelling in his suite in Corsica that she fell under the displeasure of the heathen authorities for refusing to sacrifice to idols. Her master did all he could to save her, but he failed to do so, and she was put to death by being tied to a cross and left to die.

CHAPTER IX

ST. HELENA AND THE EMPEROR CONSTANTINE

FACT and fiction are so closely interwoven with regard to St. Helena and her son that it is impossible to separate them. Some, including Gibbon, assert that the future Empress was the daughter of an innkeeper, and was born at York; others, that her father was a well-to-do citizen of Colchester. Yet another opinion, adopted by such good authorities as Leland and Henry of Huntingdon, is that St. Helena was the only child of the British King Cortus, the Old King Cole of the nursery ballad, who was the first to enclose within walls the town named after him. This tradition is memorialized in the arms of Colchester, which consist of four crowns and a cross, the latter emblem in allusion to the legend related below. In any case, it seems certain that when Constantius Chlorus wooed his bride he was still but a private officer of the Roman

army, and the fact that on his accession to the Imperial dignity in 305 he was at once divorced from the mother of Constantine would seem to favour the idea of her lowly origin, no accusation having ever been brought against her as a wife. The name of Stabularia given to St. Helena in old records, say some, means 'ostler-wench,' but those who claim that she was a Princess, insist that it has reference rather to her having built a church over the stable in which the Redeemer was born. An equally marked difference of opinion exists as to the date of St. Helena's conversion to Christianity. Theodoret and others seem to imply that she gave her son a Christian education, but Eusebius asserts that it was Constantine who converted her when she was quite an old woman. What became of St. Helena after her separation from her husband is not known, but on his accession to supreme power the new Emperor proclaimed her Augusta, and to the end of her life treated her with all possible honour and respect. Whichever account be true, it is certain that St. Helena did not receive baptism until after the great victory over Maxentius in 312; but this must not be taken to prove too much, for in those early days it had not become customary for new converts to be baptized at once as a matter of course, and Constantine himself did not receive the rite until just before his death.

The Emperor Constantine is canonized in the Greek though not in the Latin Church, and the main facts of his life must be recorded here on account of the many beautiful works of art they have inspired. He was the eldest son of Constantine Chlorus and St. Helena, and is supposed to have been born in 274 at Naissus, in Upper Mœsia. He greatly distinguished himself in the wars of Diocletian, and was a very great favourite in the army and at Court on account of his handsome person and charming manners. When, through the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian in 305, his father became joint Emperor of the West with Galerius, and his mother was divorced, he found himself in a very difficult position, for his popularity aroused the jealousy of Galerius, who endeavoured to get rid of him by placing him on every occasion in the forefront of danger. Foreseeing the difficulties with which his beloved son would have to contend, Constantius Chlorus summoned him to join him in Gaul, and, having with great difficulty obtained leave of absence, Constantine left the palace of Galerius at night, and reached



[*Hampton Court Palace*

ST. HELENA BEARING THE CROSS

By Tamaroccio

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Boulogne just as his father was starting for Britain. He took part in the successful expedition against the Picts, and was with his father when he died at York in 306, after naming him his successor as Cæsar of the West, and guardian of his six young step-brothers and sisters. Galerius reluctantly accepted an appointment he was unable to refuse, endorsed as it was by popular consent; but the life of the young Emperor was one long struggle for the next five years, until, by his great victory over Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge near Rome in 312, he became sole Emperor of the West. It was on the eve of this victory that the remarkable incident occurred which is generally supposed to have been the cause of the conversion of Constantine. The story was told by the Emperor himself to Eusebius, and was to the effect that, being anxious and worried about the approaching conflict, he was hesitating to what god to appeal for aid, when, looking up, he saw a flaming cross in the sky, on which was inscribed *Ἐν τούτῳ νίκα* (by this conquer). This was at noonday, and in a dream the same night the meaning of the portent was explained, a celestial visitor instructing Constantine to engrave upon the shields of his soldiers the monogram of the name of Christ. This was the origin of the famous standard of the Cross called the Labarum, though why no one has been able to determine, which originally consisted of a pike with a bar of wood fixed near its point, thus forming a cross, whilst on the point itself was a gem-studded crown bearing in its centre the monogram of X.R.I, the first three letters of the Greek name of Christ, said to have been a modification of the symbol of the sun-god.

The famous Labarum was not given to the army by Constantine until 323, but the Edict of Milan of 313 granting civil rights to the Christians is supposed to have been the immediate result of the so-called Vision of the Cross. It must be added, however, that those who assume that it was an actual cross seen in the sky by the Emperor are in danger of forgetting that the cross was not accepted by Christians as the emblem of our Lord's Passion until considerably later, and that the word 'cross' was used in the time of Constantine to signify the monogram which owed its origin in part to a pagan symbol. The Christians recognised in this heathen emblem a mystic prophecy of the Redeemer, but the only figure resembling a cross which they themselves

used in the first two centuries of the new era was the so-called *swastica*, resembling two interlaced Z's, and even as late as the fourth century the cross was still dissimulated, as in a fresco in the Catacomb of St. Callixtus, in which it is represented as a green tree with two horizontal branches. In the fifth century the so-called 'Nile key'—a stunted cross surmounted by a circle—was borrowed by the Christians from the Egyptians, as combining the cross with the crown, and gradually the crown came to enclose the cross. It is supposed by many authorities that the Constantinian monogram was a modification of this Egyptian symbol, and some are even of opinion that all the Emperor really saw in the sky was an unusual effect of sunlight resembling the symbol of the sun-god, but they fail to explain why a portent such as this should have been at once associated in his mind with Christianity. In any case, the fact remains that in giving the Labarum, whatever its origin, to his army Constantine set the seal of official recognition on the hitherto proscribed religion, and by so doing inaugurated a new era.

The date of the military acceptance of the cross as the sign in which to conquer, was also that of the defeat and death of Licinius, the Christian Emperor's only remaining rival. Constantine was now sole ruler of the East and West, and having decided to make Byzantium his capital, he took up his residence there, changing its name to Constantinople. The profession of Christianity now ceased to be looked upon as a crime, and although some few martyrs still suffered in outlying districts of the vast Empire, a new and glorious chapter in the history of the Church began. The long-despised sect had finally conquered, and ere long it became the turn of the heathen to be delivered over to condemnation by those who believed that there was no salvation possible for unbelievers. The man who brought about this mighty change, or, rather, who set the seal of authority upon that change—for it had been inaugurated long before his conversion—has naturally been glorified as a hero of the noblest character, one who brought light into darkness and bequeathed to his successors a boon of priceless value. Unfortunately, this estimate is not fully justified by facts. The last few years of the first Christian Emperor were stained by most unchristian crimes, including the judicial murder of his own son, the gallant Crispus, whom he suspected of ambitious designs. It is true that Constantine founded many Christian

churches, working at some of them with his own hands ; but it was not until shortly before his death that he had the heathen temples finally closed and Christianity proclaimed the religion of the State. He put off his baptism also until the last moment, probably because he had adopted the popular idea that the rite would wash away all previous guilt, and he wished to get all possible good out of it. The story of his having been baptized by Pope Sylvester at Rome in 326 is now generally known to be fictitious. Out of it, however, has grown a very picturesque legend, which has been the subject of several interesting series of frescoes.

According to this legend, St. Sylvester, who was Bishop of Rome before the conversion of Constantine, had fled from persecution, and taken refuge in a cave in Monte Calvo. Whilst St. Sylvester was in concealment the Emperor Constantine was attacked by leprosy, and the heathen priests he summoned to the palace to his aid declared that the only thing to cure him was a bath of children's blood. No less than three thousand children were collected by the soldiers to be slain, and the Emperor set forth in his chariot to the place appointed by the priests for the terrible sacrifice. On the way the mothers of the little ones intercepted him, blocking his path and piteously entreating him to be merciful. Touched to the heart, Constantine cried aloud, 'Far better that I should die than cause the murder of these innocents!' and, turning to his officers, he ordered them to release the intended victims. He then gave money to the mothers and went home again. That same night Saints Peter and Paul appeared to the Emperor in a dream, and told him to seek Bishop Sylvester, who would show him a pool wherein to wash, the waters of which would cleanse him from his leprosy. They urged him, further, to believe in the Christians' God, for it was He who had sent them to him. Constantine obeyed, and when he had found St. Sylvester he related his vision. The Bishop could not at first believe that the Apostles had really appeared to a heathen, and sent for some pictures of Saints Peter and Paul owned by a member of his flock. Constantine declared that they resembled his visitors, so St. Sylvester, interpreting the vision in his own way, baptized the Emperor, who came forth from the font healed of his disease. Convinced now that Jesus Christ was indeed God, Constantine ordered

that He should be everywhere adored as such, and that the Bishops of Rome should take precedence of all Bishops, just as the Emperor took precedence of all secular rulers. Furthermore, he granted the privilege of sanctuary to Christian churches, ordered that the tithes of all Roman lands should be given to Christ's Vicar on earth, and finally he himself dug the foundations of a new Basilica, that now known as S. Giovanni in Laterano, which was dedicated to St. John the Baptist. The Empress Helena is said to have reproached her son for his conduct on this occasion, for she was not yet converted, and she came to Rome with a large following of Jewish Rabbis, who argued the matter with certain Greek philosophers named by Constantine. To this wonderful meeting St. Sylvester also came, apparently without an invitation, and he confuted Jews and Greeks alike, rousing the anger of all against him, so that a magician named Zambri defied him to a trial of skill, declaring that if a wild bull were brought in, he would whisper a name in its ear which would kill it on the spot. The bull was fetched, requiring a hundred men to hold it ; Zambri whispered in its ear and it fell down dead. Jews and Greeks alike then fell upon the Bishop, and would have torn him to pieces, when he cried : 'The name the magician pronounced cannot have been that of God, but of the devil, for Christ our God does not strike dead the living, but restores the dead to life. It is easy to kill—wild beasts can do that—but who can give back the life that is gone ? Let Zambri restore with a word the creature he has slain : as it is written, I will kill and I will make alive.' Then the Emperor and the judges ordered Zambri to obey, but he could not. The bull remained motionless until St. Sylvester made the sign of the cross over it, when it rose up, bowing its head as meekly as if it had borne the yoke all its life.

After this extraordinary proof of the power of St. Sylvester, it is no wonder that the Emperor turned to him in every difficulty. On another occasion, when the heathen priests of Rome complained that a great dragon devoured all who ventured out of the city, Constantine sent for the Bishop, who went forth alone, bearded the dragon in the deep moat in which he dwelt, tied up his mouth with a twisted thread, and sealed it with a cross, leaving the helpless beast to die miserably, a manifest allegory of the power of the Cross to save from the death of

sin. St. Sylvester, though he was not the extraordinary character these legends would make him appear, was, indeed, evidently well fitted to govern the Church in her new position of prosperity and triumph, and the stories about him are probably founded on the real benefits he conferred on his flock, by the tact of his dealings with the first Christian Emperor.

At whatever time the conversion of St. Helena took place, it was not until some twelve years after the apparition of the flaming cross or monogram to her son, when she was quite an old woman, that she made the memorable journey to Palestine. Constantine is said to have written in 326 to St. Macarius, then Bishop of Jerusalem, on the subject of the erection of a church on Mount Calvary, and St. Helena decided to go there to superintend the carrying out of the scheme. She resolved at the same time to endeavour to find the cross on which the Saviour had suffered, having received instructions direct from heaven on the subject in a wonderful dream, in which a cross was shown to her by two beautiful child-angels.

As already stated, it was not until many years after the death of our Lord that the cross became the symbol of Christianity, and no attempt had been made by the early converts to obtain possession of the one on which the Redeemer had suffered. At the beginning of the third century, however, Christians began to use the sign of the cross, and to pray with outstretched arms in memory of the attitude in which Christ had died. From this the transition was natural to veneration of the actual instrument of His Passion, and about the time of the conversion of Constantine an eager discussion began as to the form of that instrument, some asserting that it was of the shape known as the Latin—that is to say, with arms of equal length springing from the upper part of the central shaft; others, that it was of the Greek form, with shaft and arms all exactly alike; and yet others, that it was a mere transverse cross without central shaft, forming the letter X. Now one and now another of these forms became used as a symbol side by side with the fish which had so long been the only Christian emblem; but the problem was finally solved, and the form of the cross fixed by the Empress Helena, who immediately on her arrival at Jerusalem secured the co-operation of Bishop Macarius in her quest.

Although the Christians themselves had been unable to

mark the scene of their Lord's death in any way, it was not very difficult to identify it, because the heathen had raised a temple to Venus on Calvary, with a view, it is said, to making those who came to worship on the sacred spot appear to be doing reverence to that goddess. The first thing to be done, therefore, was to destroy this temple, and the fact that St. Helena had no difficulty in getting this done is an incidental proof of the great change which had recently taken place in popular feeling with regard to the Christians. After a long search and digging to a great depth, the explorers were, it is said, rewarded by finding the three crosses with the very nails which had pierced the hands and feet of the Lord, and the Inscription which had been set up over His head. The fact that this Inscription was lying apart from the crosses, made it difficult to decide which was that of the Lord, but St. Macarius suggested that all three should be taken to the house of a Christian lady then at the point of death. This was done, and after an earnest prayer by St. Macarius that a sign might be granted to those present, the patient was touched by each of the crosses in turn. When the third and last test was applied, she sat up perfectly restored to health, and all knew that there could no longer be any doubt as to which was the true cross.

Delighted with her success, St. Helena at once ordered a beautiful church to be built on the scene of her discovery, but, unfortunately, in her eager desire that all should share in the benefits of the marvellous relic she had found she did not preserve it intact. One portion of the true cross she sent to her son at Constantinople, another with the inscription to Rome, where it is preserved in S. Croce in Gerusalemme, and a third portion she confided to Bishop Macarius for the new church at Jerusalem. The Emperor received the relic with much veneration, and in memory it is supposed of the great discovery, he put a final stop throughout his dominions to the use of the cross for the putting to death of malefactors.

The nails found with the cross St. Helena also divided. One she had set in a bridle, another in a diadem for her son, and the third she kept herself until the day when she flung it into the Adriatic during a terrible storm, with the result that the sea at once became calm, on which account sailors still look upon the gulf as sacred to the memory of the Empress.

St. Helena remained at Jerusalem until the new church was



[*National Gallery, London*
THE VISION OF ST. HELENA
By Paolo Veronese

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completed, building also a convent for holy women, in which she dwelt herself, serving the inmates with her own hands and nursing them in sickness. When she felt that her end was approaching, she returned to Rome, anxious to see her son once more, and she expired in his presence in 326 or 328. She was interred with great pomp in S. Croce in Gerusalemme, but her body is said to have been translated in the ninth century to the Abbey of Hautvilliers, in Champagne. Her empty Mausoleum is kept in a cloister of S. Giovanni in Laterano, and her memory is still preserved in the church in which she rested for a time, by a chapel bearing her name, and by two Statues, one at the entrance opposite to that of St. Sylvester, and another above the altar, which is really a copy of the Barberini Juno, except for the fact that a cross is held in the right hand and a nail in the left.

St. Helena is generally represented in Imperial robes, with a crown on her head, an open book in one hand, and in the other a cross of the form known as the *crux immissa*, with a long shaft and short arms, as in an engraving from the Boissérie Collection, now in the Munich Gallery, and in the carvings of a rood-screen at Eye in Suffolk. More rarely, as in paintings by Simone Memmi, and Il Giottino, the cross the Empress has in her hand is small, or it is replaced, as in a picture by Domenichino, by a nail, which she holds over a cup, or by a church, supposed to be that of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. She appears occasionally only in devotional pictures, as in the 'Nativity' of Cima da Conegliano in S. Maria del Carmine, Venice, and in an Altar-piece by Lambertini in the Academy of the same city.

The attributes in art of Constantine the Great are a chrism or tablet bearing the monogram of Christ, in allusion to the vision related above; a cross, which varies in size, but never in form, on account of the discovery of the true cross by his mother; and a church, because he gave a political status to the Christian religion and built many basilicas. The chrism of Constantine at first represented simply the three letters XRI, already explained, but as time went on it became replaced by a new monogram of which the meaning was not exactly the same, the IHS, or the initials of Jesus, being substituted for those of Christ, for it was urged that the Apostles had said 'at the name of Jesus,' not at the name of Christ, 'every knee shall bow.'

The introduction of the Emperor Constantine in devotional pictures is very rare, but occasionally, as in a painting by Palma Vecchio in the Brera Gallery, Milan, and in one by Cima da Conegliano in S. Giorgio in Bragora, Venice, he stands on one side of a cross, and his mother on the other. Now and then, as in the picture by Rubens, painted for her chapel at Rome, but now in private possession, St. Helena embraces the cross with both hands, or she kneels in adoration at its foot, as in a quaint old engraving reproduced by Père Cahier in his '*Caractéristiques des Saints*', in which St. Macarius is seen staggering beneath a heavy cross, with which he is touching the forehead of a woman in bed, whilst the crosses of the thieves are lying on a hill in the background.

In a quaintly-carved cross in the chancel wall of the Church of Kelloc in Durham, St. Helena is represented discovering the cross. In the Church of SS. Giovanni e Paolo, Venice, there is an interesting marble group by Antonio Dentone of the Empress presenting General Vittore Capello with a Marshal's baton, and a Statue of the same Saint, by Bolgi, occupies one of the niches of the lower part of the dome of St. Peter's. It is in fresco and in oil-painting, however, that the fullest justice has been done to the famous mother and son, the many romantic incidents of their lives having been the subjects of some of the great masterpieces of Italian art.

In the choir of the Capella Alberti in S. Croce, Florence, are a number of beautiful frescoes by Agnolo Gaddi, collectively known as the 'Finding of the True Cross,' which include many incidents leading up to the expedition to Palestine of St. Helena, with others supposed to have taken place after her time. To make these remarkable works intelligible, it is necessary to give in outline the most interesting of the legends which have gathered about the story of the Cross, going back to the time of Adam and Eve.

It is related that when Adam was at the point of death he received, by the hands of his son Seth, from the Archangel Michael, a branch of the tree of knowledge, which Seth planted above his father's heart after the burial. This branch grew into a tree, and when Solomon built the Temple at Jerusalem it was cut down for his use, but it was so tough and generally unmanageable that it was flung aside as useless. A little later

it served as a bridge for the Queen of Sheba, who, as she set foot on it, saw a vision of Christ on the cross, and knew that she was even then using the wood which should form that cross. She told her royal host of what she had seen, and he, not understanding it fully in spite of his great wisdom, had the tree buried deeply in the earth at the very spot where the Pool of Bethesda was later to witness so many miracles. The tree was one day found floating on the pool, and the Jews used it to form the cross on which the Redeemer suffered. On His death, as was customary at the time, the tree was buried in a hole dug near by, into which the crosses of the thieves were also flung, there to remain for three hundred years. After St. Helena had found and divided the true cross, the three portions rested undisturbed in the various churches in which they were enshrined, until the Holy Land was invaded in the sixth century by Chosroes II., King of Persia, who took the piece from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and carried it to his own land. In the seventh century the Byzantine Emperor Heraclius, who was an earnest Christian, determined to win back the treasure, and succeeded in doing so after a long siege of Ctesiphon, the city in which it had been kept for nearly a century. He took the holy relic back to Jerusalem, and tried to enter the city on horseback, carrying it with him. His horse, however, refused to go through the gates, and the Emperor had to dismount and carry the cross into the city on foot.

No less interesting than the frescoes of Santa Croce are those by Pietro della Francesca in the Church of S. Francesco at Arezzo, which include the 'Recognition of the holy tree by the Queen of Sheba,' who falls on her knees before it; the 'Victory of Constantine over Maxentius'; the 'Finding of the cross by St. Helena'; its 'Verification by the cure of the dying woman by means of the sacred Relic'; the 'Apparition of an angel to Heraclius,' which, faded though it is, is still remarkable for the wonderful effect of light; the 'Defeat and Death of King Chosroes in the battle with Heraclius'; and the 'Bringing back of the true Cross to Jerusalem,' in which the artist has ignored the fact that it was only a portion of it which was restored.

In another chapel of the same church are some frescoes by Giottino of the legend related above respecting St. Sylvester and the Emperor Constantine, including the Scene when

the latter desists from his terrible purpose to bathe in the blood of the children, his ‘Baptism by the Bishop,’ the ‘Restoration of the bull to life by St. Sylvester,’ and the ‘Sealing of the mouth of the dragon by the same great teacher.

In the Sala di Constantino of the Vatican various ‘Scenes from the life of Constantine the Great’ were added after the death of Raphael by Giulio Romano, with the assistance of Francesco Penni, and Rafaello dal Colle. Of these, perhaps the finest is the ‘Battle between the Emperor and Maxentius,’ in which the latter is seen drowning, whilst the former dashes on with his soldiers bearing the new standard of the cross, behind him. The ‘Baptism of the Conqueror by Bishop Sylvester,’ which is represented as taking place in the Lateran basilica, the ‘Presentation of Rome to the Pope,’ and the ‘Address of the Emperor to his troops on the subject of the Apparition of the flaming cross,’ are also very fine. The latter is said to have been designed by Raphael himself.

In the Academy of Venice is preserved an interesting fresco of the ‘Invention of the Cross’ by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, from the ceiling of the Capuchin Church at Castello; and of the many representations of the Empress, perhaps none is more beautiful than the ‘Vision of St. Helena’ by Paolo Veronese, now in the National Gallery, London, in which the Saint is represented as a beautiful young woman wrapped in the repose, not of sleep, but of suspended consciousness, the angels appearing above bearing the cross. The ‘St. Helena carrying the Cross’ at Hampton Court, which was successfully transferred from its worm-eaten panel to canvas in 1865, and was long ascribed to Lorenzo Costa, but is now supposed, with greater probability, to be the work of Tamoroccio, a pupil of Francia, is also very fine.

CHAPTER X

ST. ATHANASIUS

ST. ATHANASIUS, who was lovingly called during his lifetime the Pater Orthodxiæ, or Orthodox Father, and is spoken of by Gibbon as ‘the intrepid Athanasius . . . whose immortal



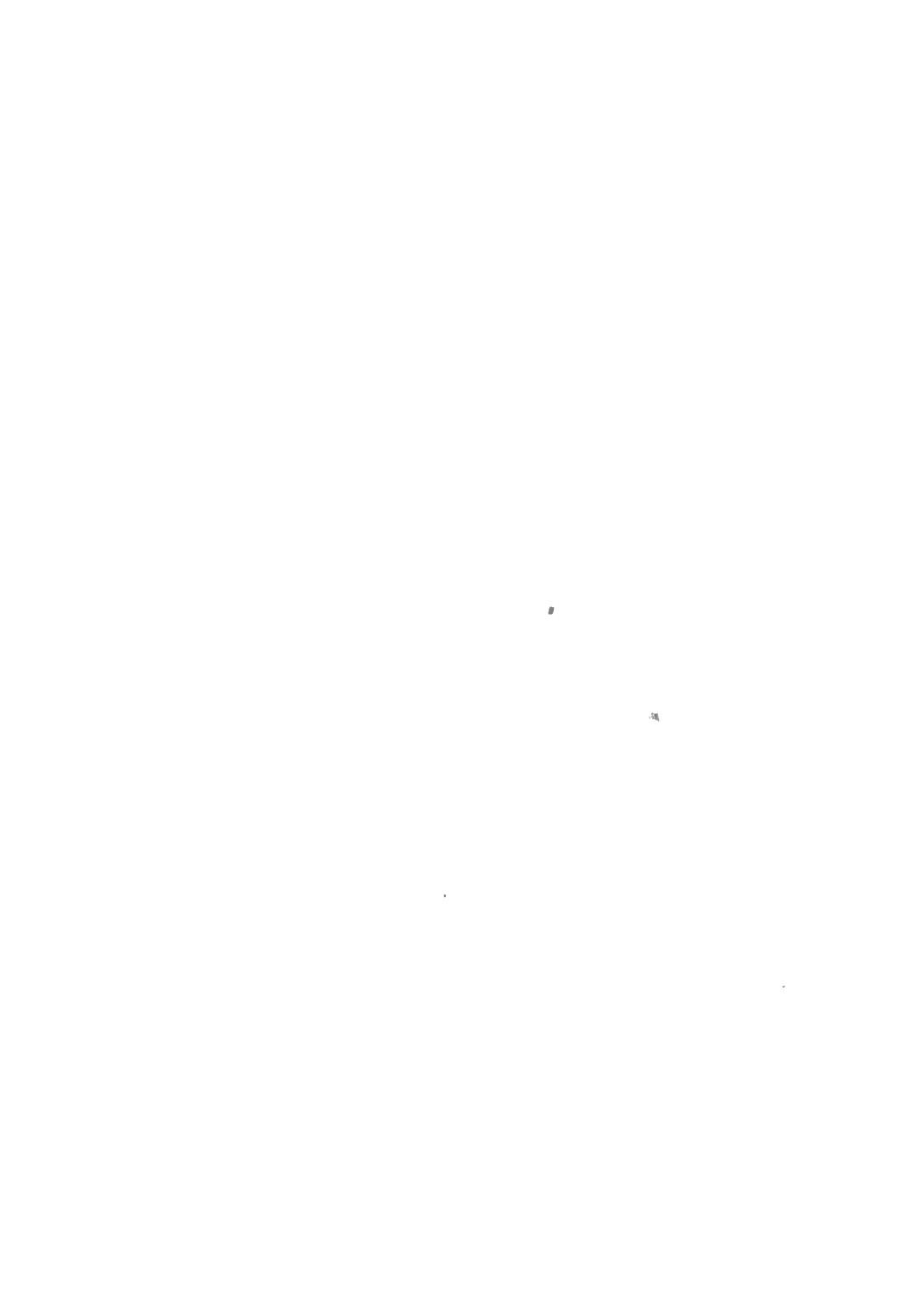
Alinari photo]

THE INVENTION OF THE CROSS

By Piero della Francesca

[*San Francesco, Arezzo*

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name will never be separated from the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity,' was born at Alexandria about A.D. 296, when his great antagonist, Arius, was already twenty years old, and had already begun to propagate the heresy, with the refutation of which the name of St. Athanasius is inseparably connected.

The parents of St. Athanasius are supposed to have been Christians, and to have died when their boy was quite a child. He was, however, adopted by St. Alexander, then Primate of Alexandria, who treated him as his own son, and by whom he was ordained as soon as he was old enough. One of the greatest pleasures of the neophyte during his probation years was to visit St. Antony the Hermit, to whom he became devotedly attached, and to whom he often turned for advice in later life.

When the Council of Nicæa was convened in 325 by the Emperor Constantine, to settle the controversy between the Orthodox believers led by St. Alexander and the heretics led by Arius, the Primate took his deacon with him to act as his secretary, and occasionally also as his spokesman. It was at this celebrated Conference that St. Athanasius first attracted general attention by his eloquence and incisive reasoning, for he met the arguments of Arius and of his supporters, Eusebius, Theognis, and Maris, with a skill which won even their reluctant admiration.

As is well known, the point at issue at this great Council turned apparently merely on a slight verbal, or rather literal, difference in the terms used to define the opinions of the combatants. The Western Bishops, who rallied round Saints Alexander and Athanasius, supported the so-called Homousian doctrine, whilst the Oriental primates, who were on the side of Arius, contended for that known as the Homoiousian, the former signifying identity with, the latter the similarity only, of the substance of the three persons of the Holy Trinity.

The triumph of St. Alexander and his friends was complete, and the 'identity of substance doctrine' was embodied before the dispersion of the Council, in what is still known as the Nicene Creed, and has for many centuries been incorporated, with certain later additions, in the Protestant Communion Service. The so-called Athanasian Creed was not really drawn up until some two centuries later, and became associated with

the name of St. Athanasius simply because it expressed so forcibly the views he entertained.

The young Athanasius had gone to Nicæa an obscure deacon ; he returned to Alexandria a celebrated orator, looked up to and reverenced by all who shared his opinions. When, five months later, St. Alexander was on his death-bed, he earnestly recommended the clergy who had gathered round him to choose St. Athanasius as his successor, and they, convinced of the wisdom of the advice, agreed to do so. It is related that the dying Bishop then called three times for his young friend to come to him, and when no answer came—for the deacon was absent on some errand—he cried : ‘Athanasius, Athanasius ! you think to escape, but you are mistaken ;’ and with these words he expired.

St. Athanasius was duly elected Primate of Alexandria, and all went well with him at first, but for some reason, not sufficiently explained by historians, Arius, who had been banished after the Council, was allowed to return to the capital, where his presence soon caused fresh difficulties to the heads of the Church. St. Eusebius of Nicomedia and the Princess Constantia both eagerly espoused the cause of Arius, and obtained for him an interview with the Emperor, who, though an able soldier and statesman, was quite unable to judge of the merits of the controversy, which he considered of trifling importance. Arius easily succeeded in satisfying his Imperial judge that he was no heretic, and Constantine sent orders to St. Athanasius to receive his antagonist back into the Church. This the Bishop naturally refused to do, with the result that he was himself summoned before the Council of Tyre to answer for his contumacy. It is related that before the meeting of the Council St. Athanasius managed to obtain an interview with the Emperor by intercepting him in a street of Constantinople, and so overawed him by his noble bearing that the monarch listened respectfully to his arguments, and, though he would not entirely forgive him or release him from the trial, yet managed that condemnation should involve no worse consequence than temporary banishment to Augusta Trevorum, the present Treves. In this initial struggle between Church and State, which has been waged ever since with more or less bitterness, it is impossible to deny that St. Athanasius was worsted for a time, at least ; and although on the death of Constantine

in 338 he was allowed to return to Alexandria, and he was nominally Primate of Egypt for forty-six years, he spent twenty of them in exile. Throughout the whole of his chequered career, however, he was ever true to his principles, working for the cause he had at heart wherever he might be, with unfailing enthusiasm, and, as his great admirer Gibbon, who calls him the ‘Ecclesiastical Dictator,’ eloquently says, counting his sufferings on account of the Homoousian doctrine ‘as the sole pleasure and business, as the duty, and as the glory of his life.’

On his condemnation by the Council of Milan, at the instance of Constantius, the unworthy successor of Constantine the Great, St. Athanasius declared that he would not leave Alexandria without an order signed by the Emperor himself; and when the church in which he was presiding over the service was besieged by a party of soldiers, he remained calmly seated on his throne, awaiting the issue of the struggle. Ready to meet the death which appeared imminent, he refused, in spite of the importunities of his clergy, to withdraw until the terrified congregation had dispersed, and it was only by a miracle that he escaped with his life, some of his devoted adherents carrying him away to the desert almost by force under cover of the confusion and darkness. A price being set on his head, he remained concealed for six years, appearing now and then amongst his friends at the risk of his life, and escaping from his enemies many times in a most remarkable manner. On one occasion he is said to have been betrayed by a female slave when he was hiding from his enemies in a dried-up well. On another he was saved by a beautiful girl, who hid him for many days in her own room, which she gave up to him, supplying him with food and books. Recalled to Alexandria in 361, on the accession of Julian, St. Athanasius was driven away again in 363 by the Emperor Valens, when he took refuge in the tomb of his father outside the city. He was now an old man, enfeebled by all he had gone through, and four months later the orthodox Alexandrians, who had been true to him through evil and good report, prevailed on the Emperor to allow him to come back. He himself describes in touching terms the state of his beloved city on the occasion of this last return. ‘The people,’ he says, ‘formed assemblies in which they reciprocally excited each other to piety and perseverance. Many young men and women who had

intended to marry gave up their union for the love of Jesus Christ; parents exhorted their children to embrace the monastic life, and children begged permission to do so as a favour. . . . Widows and orphans who had hitherto been a prey to hunger and all manner of need were nourished and provided for by charitable gifts. In a word, every house resembled a temple of God, and every family a Christian community, where day and night prayers were offered up and pious actions performed.'

St. Athanasius lived for ten years after his last experience of persecution, which he called 'a mere passing cloud'; and during these ten years the Church enjoyed a peace long unknown to it. Speaking of the wonderful influence exercised by the Patriarch over all with whom he was brought in contact, St. Gregory Nazianzus says: 'His faith was so pure and so orthodox that everyone who wished to know whether he had the true belief had but to compare it with his, and his manners were so pure and his virtues so complete that in praising Athanasius you praise virtue itself.' In 373 the much-tried Bishop passed peacefully away, 'departing this life,' says the same appreciative critic, 'with far greater honour and glory than he had received in his more than triumphant entries into Alexandria, when he returned from his banishments, so much was his death lamented by all good men.'

The four Greek Fathers: Saints Athanasius, Basil the Great, John Chrysostom, and Gregory Nazianzus, with whom is sometimes associated St. Cyril of Alexandria, are frequently introduced in Byzantine ecclesiastical decoration. Their only symbols, properly so called, are the large circular nimbus, a book, in token of their having taught the Word of God, and a church either held on the book or in the hand. St. Athanasius, however, sometimes has, in addition to these, the equilateral triangle, emblematic of the Holy Trinity, which was a symbol of those who, like himself, had to contend against Arianism. The Doctors are generally represented bare-headed, for mitres were not part of the Greek episcopal costume, and they wear the rich vestments suitable to their high rank in the Church. Occasionally to the book is added a scroll bearing some celebrated sentence from the writings of the Saint who holds it, that of St. Athanasius, for instance, having the words, 'Often and anew do we flee to thee, O God,' etc. The name

of each Doctor is generally inscribed above or beside the head, rendering symbols unnecessary for identification.

In the mosaics of the Baptistry of S. Marco at Venice, and in those of the Cathedral of Monreale, the four Greek Doctors are represented seated, and in the Christian Museum of the Vatican is a beautiful Byzantine miniature in which they appear with St. Cyril, who has a kind of cap on his head. Each has a book in the left hand, and the right is raised in the Greek attitude of benediction—that is to say, with the thumb and first finger meeting, whilst the third finger is crooked, so as to extend beyond the second and fourth, which are held upright. In the fine frescoes by Domenichino, which rank as among his best works, in the chapel of the Monastery at Grotta Ferrata, near Frascati, and in those in the Santa Casa at Loreto by Signorelli, the Fathers of the Greek Church are introduced beneath the Evangelists. The so-called Cathedra Petri, or throne designed by Bernini enclosing the old wooden chair of St. Peter, in the tribune of St. Peter's, Rome, is upheld by bronze figures of the four Doctors.

St. Athanasius, who is invoked by those suffering from headache, it is suggested because he did so much thinking himself, is rarely represented without the other Fathers, but in an ancient Greek painting reproduced in a seventeenth-century edition of his writings he is represented wearing the Archbishop's pallium. He is also sometimes introduced in old Greek paintings escaping in a boat on the Nile, pursued by soldiers, to whom he is reported to have said when they asked him if he had seen the fugitive: ‘You are on his track, and you have but to put forth your hand to take him.’

There is a fairly satisfactory statue of St. Athanasius, by Angelo Solari, in S. Francesco di Paolo at Naples; Signorelli has introduced him in a ‘Madonna and Child,’ now in the Florence Academy, and in the Altar-piece from S. Francesco at Volterra, now in the gallery of that city. In Bristol Cathedral is a fine modern window with figures of the four Greek Fathers, each writing in an open book, and St. Athanasius is amongst the Bishops introduced in the great south window of Lichfield. He appears also in one of the lights of the clerestory of Wells Cathedral.

CHAPTER XI

ST. BASIL THE GREAT

THE life of St. Basil—justly surnamed the Great, and lovingly styled in the office sacred to him the ‘divine Bee of the Church’—was full of romantic incidents, and reflected in a very remarkable degree the characteristics of the time at which he lived. He belonged to a family of illustrious descent, famed for their devotion to Christianity, and learnt the elements of the faith from his grandmother, St. Macrina, who in the early part of the fourth century fled with her husband to the desert, to escape persecution, and was there, according to a picturesque legend, fed by stags who of their own free will came to minister to the needs of the exiles.

Born at Cæsarea in 328, St. Basil was named after his father, St. Basil the Elder, and was the eldest of four sons, the other three being Naucratius, of whom little is known, St. Gregory of Nyassa, and St. Peter of Sebaste. After spending some years at a school in Cæsarea, the young Basil went to Constantinople, where he worked under the celebrated heathen rhetorician Libanus, with whom he corresponded to the end of his life, in spite of the great difference in their opinions. From the Eastern capital the eager student passed to Athens, still, in spite of the decline which had set in at the end of the third century, an intellectual centre, where he became the close friend of two men who were to exercise almost as great an influence as himself over their contemporaries: the future Emperor Julian the Apostate, and St. Gregory of Nazianzus, who in his writings has given such a vivid picture of St. Basil and himself in their happy student days.

‘We knew only two streets,’ says St. Gregory, ‘and chiefly the first of these, which led us to the church and to the holy teachers and doctors, who there attended the service of the altar and nourished the flock of Christ with the food of life. The other street with which we were acquainted, but which we held in much less esteem, was the road to the schools and to our masters in the sciences. We left to others the streets which led to the theatres, to spectacles and diversions. We

made it our only and great affair ; it was our only aim, and all our glory, to be called and to be Christians.'

St. Basil had at first intended to be a lawyer, and after winning a great name for learning and eloquence at Athens, he returned to his native city, where he founded a school for oratory, which quickly became famous. A great career as a pleader and teacher seemed to be before him, when to the astonishment of all his friends he suddenly resolved to renounce the world and become a monk, in consequence, it is said, of the persuasions of his sister, St. Macrina the younger, who with her mother's aid had lately opened a nunnery for devout women, not far from Cæsarea.

St. Basil was now about thirty years old, and until the age of thirty-eight he kept his resolution of hiding his great gift of eloquence, leading the austere life of a recluse, and founding in the desert of Pontus the first monastic society properly so called of the Greek Church. To it the name of the Basilian Order was given, and it became practically the model of all later institutions of the kind in the East, the rules laid down by St. Basil for the guidance of his infant community being still strictly followed in Oriental monasteries.

In 358 St. Basil, after having visited all the monasteries of Syria, Egypt, and Mesopotamia, returned to Cæsarea, and was there ordained presbyter by the Bishop, Dianæus, who had baptized him as a child. After his ordination, however, St. Basil again withdrew to the desert, governing his monastery, which was opposite to the nunnery of his brother, on the banks of the Iris, for another five years, and practising such terrible austerities that his health was completely ruined. St. Gregory of Nazianzus, who joined him for a time, says that 'he was so excessively pale his body scarce seemed to have life ; . . . he was without a wife, without estate or goods, without flesh, and seemingly without blood. . . . He never had more than one tunic and one coat, he slept on the ground, sometimes watching all night, never had a bath, and lived on bread and water only.' 'It was his riches,' adds his friend, 'to have no earthly goods, and to follow naked the cross of his Saviour, which was all his treasure.'

On his accession to the Imperial throne in 361, Julian, the old friend and school-fellow of St. Basil, invited him to come to Court, promising him preferment, but the recluse replied that

the life he had chosen made it impossible for him to consent. In 362, however, he resigned the government of his monastery to his brother, St. Peter of Sebaste, and returned home, feeling, perhaps, that the time had come for him to do other work. No sooner was he back in Cæsarea than a second letter came from the Emperor, couched in very different terms, and threatening, unless St. Basil paid a large sum into the Imperial Exchequer, the town of Cæsarea should be razed to the ground. Needless to add that the threat had no greater effect than the offer of preferment; the monk replied that he had not enough money to buy himself food for a single day, and boldly expressed his surprise that his correspondent should neglect the essential duties of his crown, and provoke the anger of God by openly contemning His worship.

Julian, who, had he lived, and had his old friend condescended to humour him a little, might have been won to better things, took no notice of this reproof, but resolved that St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzus, who had also defied him, should be arraigned when he himself should return from his expedition to Persia. As is well known, however, the Emperor was killed at the beginning of the campaign. St. Basil remained unmolested, and spent much of his time preaching to the people of Cæsarea, winning back many who had joined the Arians to their allegiance to the Church. On the death, in 370, of Eusebius, who had succeeded Dianæus in the See of Cæsarea, St. Basil, who had long aided the Bishop with his counsels, was chosen to take his place, and he retained that office until his own death in 379. The last nine years of his life were one long struggle against difficulties of every kind. The Emperor Valens, who had espoused the cause of the Arians, singled him out for persecution, ordering him to conduct the services of his church according to the heretic custom, and threatening him, if he did not comply, with banishment first, and, if he continued obstinate, with death. St. Basil refused firmly but gently, and Modestus, the envoy sent by Valens to bring him to reason, after several interviews with him, wrote to his employer: 'We are overcome; this man is above our threats.' Valens resolved, therefore, to see what he could do in person, and he came to Cæsarea with all his Court, appearing, with a long train of attendants, on the feast of the Epiphany, in the church in which St. Basil was officiating.



Mansell photo]

[Louvre, Paris

THE MASS OF ST. BASIL

By Subleyras

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The arrival of the Emperor caused, of course, a great stir amongst the congregation, but neither the Bishop nor his clergy paid the slightest attention to him. This very unexpected reception took Valens by surprise ; his mind, ever readily swayed by circumstance, veered round in favour of a man who could dare thus openly to defy him, and, to the astonishment of his followers, he went quietly up to the altar to offer the usual gift. Here a fresh blow awaited him ; the priest, receiving no sign from the Bishop, hesitated to accept the Imperial offering, and Valens was so overcome with emotion at this public insult that he fainted away, and would have fallen to the ground had not one of his guards caught him in his arms.

According to another account of the same incident, St. Basil accepted the oblation at the altar, but declined to administer the Communion to the Emperor. In either case, the attitude of the Bishop was full of dignity, and in a private conference which took place between him and the Emperor a few days later, several concessions were granted to the orthodox Christians. Moreover, Valens gave a large sum of money to a hospital founded by the Bishop, and for a short time it seemed likely that the ascendancy gained by him over the Emperor would be maintained. Valens had, however, no sooner left Cæsarea than the old bitterness returned. He issued an edict of banishment against St. Basil, and his messengers were actually on their way to enforce obedience to it, when the little Prince Valentianus Galens, the Emperor's only child, was taken dangerously ill. The parents were in despair, and the Empress Dominica, who had been troubled by terrible dreams for some time, declared that she believed the child's illness was a punishment for the Emperor's harshness to the Bishop of Cæsarea. Valens sent in all haste for St. Basil, whose prayers for the little sufferer were answered. The Bishop returned home believing that he had now finally secured the friendship of the Emperor, but he had not been gone long before the old influences were brought to bear against him. It is related that Valens tried three times to sign another edict of banishment, but that on each attempt the reed he was using broke in his hand. The boy whom St. Basil had restored to health was baptized by an Arian Bishop, and soon afterwards died ; but even this signal judgment did not touch the heart of Valens, who continued his hostility to the orthodox Christians.

until his tragic death in 378, one year only before that of St. Basil.

The last words of the much-tried Bishop of Cæsarea were : ‘ Into Thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.’ He was but fifty-one years old, and his end was undoubtedly hastened by his own neglect of the laws of health. He left behind him a great reputation for learning, and his fame, as Gibbon justly says, ‘ has been immortal in the monastic history of the East. With a mind that had tasted the learning and eloquence of Athens, with an ambition scarcely to be satisfied by the archbishopric of Cæsarea, Basil retired to a savage solitude in Pontus, and deigned to give laws to the spiritual colonies which he profusely scattered along the coast of the Black Sea.’ The same able critic dwells on the beautiful friendship between Saints Basil and Gregory Nazianzus, ‘ in which every spark of emulation or envy appeared to be totally extinguished in their holy and ingenuous breasts,’ but at the same time he charges the Archbishop of Cæsarea with spiritual pride, and gives as an instance, his offer to St. Gregory ‘ of the wretched village of Sasima out of the fifty bishoprics in his gift, a favour received and perhaps intended, as a cruel insult.’

St. Basil the Great, who was surnamed the Torch of the Universe by Theodoret, the Ornament of the Church by St. Isidore of Pelusium, and was spoken of at the Great Council of Chalcedon, held in 451, as the Interpreter of truth to the whole earth, is said to have been directly inspired by the Holy Spirit, and it is related of him, as of St. Gregory the Great and St. John Chrysostom, that a white dove was sometimes seen perched on his shoulder whispering in his ear as he was engaged in writing. His works include the so-called ‘ Liturgy of the Holy Basil,’ still in use in the Greek Church, and many eloquent homilies, which are looked upon as priceless heirlooms by Christians of all shades of belief. Many touching legends are related of the miracles performed by the beloved Bishop. On one occasion, when he was praying to God to ward off from the Christians the evils with which they were threatened by Julian the Apostate, St. Mercurius, a martyred soldier who had suffered under Decius, appeared to him in full armour, and told him his petition would be granted. So efficacious, indeed, was the intercession of St. Basil supposed to be, that he was credited with the power

of releasing souls from purgatory, and even to have been able to rescue lost angels who had never lived on earth. One of them known as Galaxy, who fell from heaven at the same time as Satan himself, and had remained in hell ever since, is said by the Armenians to have been restored to the favour of God by the saintly Bishop, who knew that he had become involved in the ruin of his fellow-sufferers from accident, not from crime.

When grouped with the other doctors of the Greek Church, as in the frescoes at Grotta Ferrata and elsewhere, and in two engravings of the 'Acta Sanctorum,' St. Basil wears the ornate robes of his episcopal office, and is distinguished from his colleagues by the great length of his beard, in allusion, according to some authorities, to his having founded the first monastic order in the Greek Church. When he appears as a monk, he wears the simple black tunic, with a cowl and the rope or leather girdle of his own order, which has never varied since its first introduction in his lifetime. Occasionally he holds a scroll bearing a sentence from one of his homilies, beginning, 'None of us who are in bondage of fleshly desires are worthy.'

When introduced in devotional pictures, the great Bishop generally holds a church in his right hand, on account of his work in Cæsarea or of his foundation of the Basilian Order. Scenes from his life are rare in art, but he is sometimes represented giving a plate of food to a beggar, or receiving the gifts of the faithful at the altar. In S. Maria degli Angeli at Rome is a fine painting by Subleyras, reproduced in mosaics in the Capella Gregoriana of St. Peter's, for which the original drawing is in Louvre, of the dramatic scene in the church at Cæsarea, when the Emperor Valens fainted away on the refusal of St. Basil to give him the Holy Sacrament. The Louvre also owns a beautiful interpretation of the character of St. Basil by Francisco de Herrera the elder, who has represented the Bishop dictating to his secretary, and a few episodes from the life of the Bishop are also introduced in the manuscript edition of the sermons of his friend St. Gregory of Nazianzus, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris.

CHAPTER XII

ST. GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS

As has been pointed out by Mr. Bury, the learned editor of one of the latest editions of Gibbon's 'Rome,' the name by which the great Bishop of Nazianzus is generally known is incorrect. He should be called Gregory of Nazianzus or Gregory Nazianyene, not Gregory Nazianzen. Born at Arianzus, a little village near Nazianzus, he belonged, as did St. Basil, to a family of saints, and was the son of St. Gregory, whom he succeeded in the See of Nazianzus, and St. Norma, his wife, who was celebrated for her piety. Two of his sisters were also canonized, and his boyhood was passed in a refined and sheltered home. He himself relates that when he was still a child he had a wonderful dream, which exercised a considerable influence over his after-life. Two beautiful girls clothed in white, and with faces shining like the stars of heaven, stood beside him, took him in their arms, and kissed him as if he belonged to them. He asked them who they were and whence they came, to which they replied that they were called Chastity and Wisdom, adding: 'We come to thee from Paradise, where we stand ever before the throne of Christ and taste ineffable joy. Come to us and dwell with us for ever.' The vision then gradually faded away, and as the young Gregory stretched out his arms towards his heavenly visitors, he awoke.

After spending a short time at one of the celebrated schools of Cæsarea, Gregory was sent first to Alexandria, and then to Athens, for the completion of his education. In the latter city he met St. Basil, for whom he at once conceived a great affection, which, but for a brief alienation in later life, he retained to the last. Writing of his attachment to the chosen friend of his youth, St. Gregory says: 'Corporeal love, having for its aim perishable things only, is necessarily perishable like a flower of spring. When the material is exhausted, entirely consumed by fire, the flame goes out for want of food, just as when the beloved matter decomposes love ceases. But the love of souls comes from God, attaches itself to imperishable things, and as a consequence it is eternal and imperishable.'

even as God is. . . . Souls thus united by a chaste love, the nearer they come to the end of their lives the more they become conscious of the first rays of blessed eternity and the nearer they draw to each other.'

When the news of the death of St. Basil was brought to St. Gregory, he expressed his grief in words which call up a vivid picture of their youth together. 'Who,' he said, 'can give me back the happy old days when I was rich with you in the midst of poverty and privation? Who will give me back the beautiful starlight nights which we passed together singing the praises of God? Who will restore to me the prayers we prayed in common, the innocent and angelic life we led, the harmony of soul which united us and merged our natures in one pure and sacred fraternity; our serious and deep studies in the holy books, in which, thanks to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, we daily found new truth and light?' In a letter of condolence to St. Basil's mother on the loss of her gifted son, St. Gregory wrote, 'I have lost half myself in losing him,' and added: 'But I see him often in my dreams. He comes to teach, to warn, or to reprove me as he used to do when he was alive.'

Beautiful as was the affection between these two great men, it might perhaps have been better for St. Gregory and for those who knew how to value his great gifts of eloquence if he had been less influenced by the ascetic teaching of his friend. The austereities the two practised in their retreat in the desert of Pontus no doubt shortened the lives of both, and greatly marred their powers of usefulness. On leaving Athens, at the age of thirty, St. Gregory was baptized by his father, and resolved to dedicate his whole life to God. To quote his own words once more: 'I have,' he said, 'given all I have to Him, from whom I received it, and have taken Him alone for my whole possession. I have consecrated to Him my goods, my glory, my health, my tongue, and my talents.' In 358 he joined St. Basil in his retreat on the Iris, but at the urgent request of his father he returned to Nazianzus in 361, where, very much against his own will, he was ordained priest, for he knew that, having once accepted that office, he could no longer rightly shut himself away from work in the Church. He fled back to St. Basil, it is true, but his conscience would not let him rest, and on Easter Day of the same year he reappeared at Nazianzus

and was appointed by his father, the Bishop, to preach in the great church. The eloquent oration delivered on this occasion, which has been preserved under the name of St. Gregory's 'Apology for his flight,' proved to all who heard it how mistaken the speaker was in thinking he could best serve God by silence. His own resolution was, however, unchanged. He assisted the Bishop for some little time in his work at Nazianzus, accepted in 371 the bishopric of Sasima, given to him by St. Basil, but he never took up his residence there, and on the death of his father, in 374, he was appointed his successor. Nominally Bishop, St. Gregory spent most of his time in a monastery at Seleucia, but after the death of the Emperor Valens, he was persuaded to go to Constantinople, then the scene of a fierce struggle between the orthodox Christians and the Arians, to take charge of a small congregation still faithful to the doctrine known as the Nicene. Here his learning and eloquence soon won him a great number of adherents, and after a couple of years of fruitful work he was made by the Emperor Theodosius, Archbishop of the capital of the East, a dignity he would gladly have dispensed with. This appointment so enraged the Arians that they made several attempts to assassinate the new prelate, and St. Gregory, who would not have yielded from any fear of death, saw in this hostility his opportunity to escape from the honour he had never sought. At a great assembly of dignitaries of the Church, he is said to have cried out : 'If my holding the See of Constantinople gives any disturbance, behold, I am very willing, like Jonah, to be cast into the sea to appease the storm, though I did not raise it. If all followed my example, the Church would enjoy an uninterrupted tranquillity. This dignity I never desired. I took this charge upon me much against my will; if you think fit, I am most ready to depart, and I will return back to my little cottage.'

The Bishops, astonished at such a speech from a man so much dreaded, gladly accepted his resignation; but, as St. Gregory himself well knew, this was not enough to release him from an appointment bestowed on him by the Emperor, so he went direct from the church to the palace, flung himself on his knees before the astonished Theodosius, and said to him : 'I am come to ask neither riches nor honours for myself or friends, nor ornaments for the churches, but license to retire. Your Majesty knows how much against my will I was placed in this chair. . . . I

beseech you, and this is my last petition, that among your triumphs you make this the greatest, that you restore to the Church unity and concord.'

With infinite difficulty Theodosius was persuaded to grant this strange request, and in the great church of St. Sophia, St. Gregory, in a magnificent and most pathetic sermon, bade farewell to his beloved flock, concluding with the touching words: 'Dear children, preserve the deposit of faith, and forget not the stones which have been thrown at me because I planted it in your hearts.'

Followed out of the city by a weeping crowd who vainly entreated him not to leave them, St. Gregory left Constantinople never to return, and after a short visit to Nazianzus, where he appointed Eulalius to the bishopric in his stead, he withdrew to his little cottage at Arianzus, where he remained until his death in 389, spending his leisure in writing poems and homilies, many of which are still unsurpassed for beauty of diction and spirituality of feeling. He was buried at Nazianzus, but in 950 his remains were translated to Constantinople, whence they were later removed to Rome and re-interred in St. Peter's.

The first Christian poet, and surnamed the Theologian on account of his great eloquence in defending the Nicene Creed against the attacks of the Arians, St. Gregory of Nazianzus will ever hold an exceptional position in the Greek Church; but in the West his fame has been completely overshadowed by that of his namesake, St. Gregory the Great. He appears, of course, with the other Greek Fathers, amongst whom he is distinguished by his short, bushy beard, in ecclesiastical decorations, and elsewhere, sometimes holding a scroll with the words in Greek: 'God the Holy among the Holies, the thrice holy,' but almost the only examples of representations of scenes from his life are the ninth-century miniatures in the manuscript edition of his 'Orations,' preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, already referred to in connection with St. Basil, and a painting in the Louvre by Jacques Callot, representing the vision referred to above.

CHAPTER XIII

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

THE most popular, and at the same time, perhaps, also the most saintly of the four Greek Fathers, St. John Chrysostom, or the golden-mouthed—so called on account of his great eloquence—was born at Antioch about 347, and was brought up as a Christian by his widowed mother Arethusa. He was educated as a lawyer, and had already won great renown as a pleader at the bar, when at the age of twenty-six he resolved to renounce the world. When the young John declared that the only true way of serving God was to lead a life of solitary penitence, Arethusa, a woman of cultured intellect, and endowed with the yet rarer gift of practical common-sense, tried in vain to convince him that his resolution was at the best a selfish one. He escaped from Antioch and hid himself in the desert, where he remained for nearly six years, weakening himself so much by fasting and self-inflicted penance that he was at last obliged to return home to save his life. Back again in Antioch, he attracted the notice of the Bishop, St. Meletius, who persuaded him to live with him for three years, ordained him Reader, and endeavoured to win him from his undue love of silence and solitude. For a time it seemed as if he had succeeded, but in 374 St. John fled once more to the desert, where he joined a community of anchorites, celebrated even in that day of asceticism for the severity of their self-discipline. It was not, indeed, until he was already past forty that the real work of the life of St. John Chrysostom began, when the holy Bishop Honoriūs, to whom the Christians owed so much, induced him finally to abandon his retreat and become a preacher of the Gospel in his native city. Ordained priest in 386, a white dove, it is said, hovering above his head at his consecration, St. John of the Golden Mouth very quickly proved how true had been his mother's judgment concerning him, for he won over to the Church such numbers of converts that the building in which he preached was soon too small to hold his congregation. When the people of Antioch fell under the just displeasure of the

Emperor, it was St. John who composed the speech of St. Flavianus, which so touched the heart of the Emperor that he granted a full pardon to the offenders.

Again, when the Roman supremacy was divided between the sons of Theodosius I., and Arcadius became the Emperor of the East, the voice of St. Chrysostom was often fearlessly raised against the luxury of the Court. He became indeed so great a power in the land that in 397, by the advice of Eutropius, the favourite eunuch of Arcadius, he was made Archbishop of Constantinople on the death of Nectarius.

The thought of losing their beloved teacher so moved the people of Antioch that they refused to let him go, and it was not until an armed escort was sent to fetch him that he was able to start for his new sphere of action. Arrived in the capital of the East, St. John at once set to work to practise the doctrines he had preached as a priest. He reduced the number of the servants in his palace, leading a life almost as austere as he had done in the desert, and giving away so much money in charity that he became known as St. John the Almoner. Not long after his accession to the archiepiscopal throne, occurred one of the most striking incidents of his remarkable career: his rescue of Eutropius from the fury of the mob. The eunuch, who had so long virtually ruled the Empire, was suddenly disgraced, the Empress Eudoxia having complained to her husband of a real or imaginary insult he had offered to herself. Pursued by the officers of justice sent to arrest him, the unhappy man fled to the cathedral for sanctuary, and took refuge beneath the altar at which the Archbishop was officiating. St. John Chrysostom, unmoved by the clamours of the people, or by the fact that a troop of soldiers with drawn swords surrounded the building, ascended the pulpit, that he might, says Gibbon, 'be distinctly seen and heard by an innumerable crowd of either sex and every age, and pronounced a reasonable and pathetic discourse on the forgiveness of injuries and the instability of human greatness. The agonies of the pale and affrighted wretch,' continues the historian, 'grovelling under the table of the altar, exhibited a solemn and instructive spectacle, and the orator, who was afterwards accused of insulting the misfortunes of Eutropius, laboured to excite the contempt that he might assuage the fury of the people.' Eutropius escaped for the time, only to

be impeached for high treason and beheaded a few months later, but the fame of the man who had been able to hold spell-bound by his eloquence, so many thirsting for vengeance, and to induce even the Emperor to respect the sanctuary of the Church, became so great that St. John, in his turn, aroused the jealousy of Eudoxia, who, having got rid of Eutropius, now determined to bring about also the exile of his rescuer. St. John, it is said, had aroused her special animosity by his sermons against extravagance in dress, which she chose to think were intended to apply specially to her.

Aided by the influence of Theophilus, the Patriarch of Alexandria, who was also incensed against the Archbishop on account of his admission to communion of certain so-called heretics, the Empress succeeded in obtaining a decree of banishment against him, and he was driven out of Constantinople in 403, after preaching a farewell sermon full of the noblest resignation to the will of God, in which he declared himself ready to die a thousand deaths for his people, if he could only save their souls. ‘Violent storms encompass me on all sides,’ he exclaimed, ‘yet I am without fear, because I stand upon a rock. Though the sea roar, and the waves rise high, they cannot sink the vessel of Jesus. I always say,’ he added, ‘O Lord, may Thy will be done: not what this or that creature wills, but what it shall please Thee to appoint, that shall I do and suffer with joy. This is my strong tower; this is my unshaken rock; this is my staff that can never fail.’

The soldiers sent to see that the Emperor was obeyed were only able to fulfil their duty through the aid of the victim himself, who managed to elude the vigilance of his friends and to deliver himself into the hands of his enemies. He had not, however, been gone from the city many days before a terrible earthquake took place, which so alarmed the guilty conscience of the Empress that she entreated Arcadius to recall St. John, crying in her terror, ‘If he do not return our Empire is undone.’ The Emperor consented, and the Archbishop was brought back again in triumph, all the inhabitants of the town going out to meet him. He was, however, again banished in the following year, and he was never afterwards allowed to return.

When, on the death of Eudoxia, the broken-hearted widower Arcadius wrote to the celebrated hermit, St. Nilus, asking his prayers for the Empire, the holy man replied: ‘How



Alinari photo]

ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

By Sebastiano del Piombo

[*St. Gian Grisostomo, Venice*

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do you hope to see Constantinople delivered from the destroying angel of God after . . . having banished the most blessed John, the pillar of the Church, the lamp of truth, the greatest light of the earth?' Meanwhile many powerful statesmen had endeavoured to obtain the recall of St. John, but their importunity, unfortunately, only led to fresh proceedings against him. He had taken refuge at Nicæa, and was there fervently preaching the Gospel, when orders were received that he should be removed to the little town of Cucusus, in a remote district of the Taurus Mountains. There he was received with the greatest enthusiasm by the inhabitants, and was allowed to remain unmolested for a short time, converting many Persians to Christianity, and writing numerous beautiful letters and essays, full of touching resignation, proving how true was his own assertion: 'None can trust the man who will not trust himself.' The three years spent at Cucusus and the neighbouring town of Arabissus, were, says Gibbon, 'the last and most glorious of the life of the great teacher. His character was consecrated by absence and persecution . . . every tongue repeated the praises of his genius and virtue, and the respectful attention of the Christian world was fixed on a desert spot among the mountains of Taurus.' The Emperor Honorius, recognising how great a mistake had been made in banishing such a man, endeavoured to get his cause brought before what the historian calls 'the supreme tribunal of a free and general council.' But it was all in vain; the enemies of the Saint were too powerful, and the weak-minded Arcadius could not be induced to interfere in his behalf.

The agitation in favour of St. John resulted merely in a fresh edict of banishment against him. He was to be removed at once from the new home he had learnt to love, to the yet more remote town of Pytius on the Euxine. It is even believed by some that secret orders were given, to the officers sent to take him there, to bring about his death on the road, if possible, and so end all further trouble on his behalf. Worn out with all he had gone through, and with a constitution weakened by his early austerities, the much-persecuted Saint, though as yet only sixty years old, was in no fit state to travel, and he died on the road after terrible sufferings. It is related that on the eve of his death he was allowed to rest for a few hours in a little wayside shrine above the remains of the

martyr St. Basiliscus, who appeared to him in a dream, and said to him : ‘ Be of good courage, Brother John ; to-morrow we shall be together.’ This greatly cheered the Archbishop, and when he awoke he begged his guards to let him remain in the shrine for a few hours longer, in the hope of thus winning permission to die in peace. They refused, and compelled him to proceed, but he had not gone far before it became evident that he was dying, and touched, perhaps, at last by his patient suffering, the men carried him back to the shrine and laid him down on it. With a touching desire to do honour to the moment of his meeting with the Lord he had served so well, St. John persuaded his companions to allow him to put on his white robes. His last prayer is said to have been the beautiful one still in use in the English Church, ending with the petition, ‘granting us in this world knowledge of Thy truth, and in the world to come life everlasting,’ and when the Amen had been said he died with the words ‘Glory be to God in all things’ trembling on his lips. He was buried beside St. Basiliscus, but his body was translated to Constantinople in 434, where it was re-interred with great pomp in the Church of the Apostles, in the presence of the Emperor Theodosius II., who, it is related, had gone out to meet the funeral procession at Chalcedon, and there, ‘falling prostrate on the coffin, had implored in the name of his guilty parents, Arcadius and Eudoxia, the forgiveness of the injured Saint.’

The noble simplicity and unselfish devotion of the life of St. John Chrysostom have not, unfortunately, prevented the growth of many incongruous legends respecting him, which are without any foundation in fact, and are altogether out of harmony with his character. The beautiful and significant name of the Golden-mouthed is explained as having reference to an interview between St. John and the devil, in which the latter, eager to prevent the writing of words which would win souls to God, upset the Saint’s inkhorn. St. John appealed to heaven for aid, and, impelled to put his pen in his mouth by unseen guidance, he drew it out filled with golden ink. In the words of a quaint old French manuscript, with a representation in miniature of the interview, preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris: ‘En sa bouche l’encre prenoit, sa salive devenoit ors.’ The writer further explains that after this all the books of the Saint were written in gold : ‘Quant sene

fut la novele, que ses livres tot d'or escrit, et qu'en sa bouche destrempre prist, par miracle, Dieu en loèrent, et pus bouche d'or l'apelèrent.'

Absurd as is this explanation of a surname, the meaning of which is apparent to the least observant, it is excelled in grotesqueness by the horrible legend relating to the so-called Penitence of St. John Chrysostom, alluded to here only on account of its representation in art. This libel—for libel it certainly is—on the memory of a man whose life was exceptionally pure, appears to have originated in Italy in the fifteenth century, and it so took the popular fancy that it became the theme of many ballads, which were reprinted again and again, and translated with variations into German and French. Briefly told, the story is this: during his seclusion in the desert, St. John the golden-mouthed was visited by a beautiful girl to whom he became greatly attached, and who bore him a son. Just before the birth of the child was to take place, the Saint repented of his wickedness, and flung the expectant mother down a precipice. He then resolved to do seven years' penance for his double crime, swearing that he would neither eat bread, drink wine, look up into the face of heaven, or speak either in Greek or Latin, unless in the interval an infant of seven days old should open its mouth and say, ‘Heaven hath pardoned thee; go in peace.’ The introduction of this saving clause, with its naïve leaving open of a door of escape, is enough to betray the popular origin of the story, and the event proved how wise was the reservation.

The Saint, after making his vow, stripped himself naked, and spent many months, some versions of the legend say years, walking on all fours on the ground like a wild beast. At last the strange animal was found by the huntsmen of the King of the country, and taken home to be added to the royal menagerie. Not long after a son was born to the Queen, and when the infant was seven days old he astonished everyone by proclaiming in perfectly intelligible language that God had forgiven the sins of the hermit. The wonderful tale concludes with the finding of the poor girl, who had been thrown down the precipice, alive and well, with a beautiful child of seven years old beside her. She turns out to be of royal birth, and is restored to her parents with much rejoicing, whilst the pardoned Saint returns to his cell, there to resume his life of solitary meditation.

Sometimes the incident of the golden ink is worked into the same legend as the Penance story, and the devil is left out altogether. The new-born babe challenges St. John to speak, but he makes signs that he will write. An inkstand is brought, and turns out to be empty, so the hermit wets his pen in his mouth, which becomes filled with golden ink. In yet another version the precocious baby declines to be baptized by the Pope, who has come a long distance to perform the ceremony, and cries aloud three times, 'I will not be baptized by thee, but by St. John,' an appeal the supposed wild beast responds to with eager joy.

Many quaint illustrations of details of the Penance legend are introduced in mediæval collections of legends, and it has been treated also by the Behams, Albrecht Dürer, and Lucas Cranach, who have all represented the wronged woman and her child in the foreground, whilst St. John is seen grovelling on the ground in the background, wearing, in the engravings by Dürer and the Behams, a singularly incongruous halo about his head.

Amongst the attributes given to St. John Chrysostom, who is more often introduced in devotional pictures in the Roman Catholic Church than any of the other Greek Fathers, are a pen, the usual symbol of a writer; a beehive, in allusion, it is supposed, to his honeyed words; and a dove, in remembrance of the incident said to have taken place at his ordination. When he holds a scroll, it generally bears the words, 'God our God, who has given us for food the Bread of Life,' a quotation from one of his own homilies.

St. John Chrysostom is sometimes represented being carried along in a fainting condition by his escort of soldiers, or bound to an ass, with his head drooping from exhaustion. He is introduced with St. Athanasius, St. Leo, and St. Thomas Aquinas, amongst the Latin Fathers in the Chapel of Nicholas V. in the Vatican; in S. Giovanni Elemosinaro at Venice is a fine composition by Titian, representing the Patriarch of Alexandria as the Almsgiver seated on a raised podium, with a beggar at his feet, and in S. Giovanni Crisostomo in the same city is a grand Altar-piece by Sebastiano del Piombo, considered one of his greatest works, in which St. John Chrysostom is enthroned, attended by numerous saints, including Augustine and John the Baptist. In a chapel



[Alinari photo]

[*S. Giovanni Elemosinario*, Venice

THE CHARITY OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

By Titian

on the left of the choir the golden-mouthed Father appears again, grouped with Saints Andrew, Onofrio, and Agnes. The character of St. John has also been finely interpreted by Rubens in a painting now in private possession, in which the Patriarch holds a chalice in one hand and rests the left on the Gospels, whilst above his head hovers the dove, typical of the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

CHAPTER XIV

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA

ST. CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, whose name is inseparably connected with the great controversy on the subject of the Incarnation of our Lord, waged during his episcopate, was born towards the close of the fourth century, though exactly when is not known. Educated by his uncle Theophilus, then Archbishop of Alexandria, he imbibed from him all the most advanced ideas as to the authority of the priesthood, and the necessity for rigorous measures against those who differed from the interpretation of doctrine accepted as orthodox by the Church. Sent to study for a few years under the celebrated Abbot Serapion in one of the monasteries of Nitria, the young Cyril worked with such ardour that he quickly mastered all the learning of the Fathers. 'He extended round his cell,' says Gibbon, 'the cobwebs of scholastic theology, and whilst outwardly engaged in praying and fasting, his thoughts were ever fixed upon the world, to which he longed to return. When the summons came at last, he hastened eagerly back to Alexandria, was ordained priest by his uncle, and his eloquent sermons soon made him famous throughout the city. Of noble presence and with a voice of remarkable sweetness, he soon became greatly beloved, and when Theophilus died he was chosen to succeed him as Patriarch, in spite of the opposition of the military authorities. He began his episcopate with stern measures against all who did not agree with him, forbidding the so-called Novatians to meet for worship, and expelling the Jews from Alexandria. When Orestes the Prefect complained of the exile of so many wealthy and harm-

less citizens, Cyril refused to rescind his orders, taking no measures to prevent the tumult which ensued, during which Orestes himself was attacked by a band of monks from the desert. A stone flung by one of them named Ammonius wounded the Governor in the face. His guards seized the offender, and he was scourged to death by the lictors. Cyril then ordered the body of the victim to be escorted by a solemn procession of clergy to the cathedral, where it was interred with all the pomp befitting the funeral of a martyr, and in an eloquent oration from the pulpit the Patriarch denounced Orestes as a murderer.

The tragedy of the death of Ammonius was soon followed by another, which has left an indelible stain upon the name of Cyril. The beautiful Hypatia, whose character has been so nobly interpreted by Charles Kingsley in his romance named after her, was then in the zenith of her fame, her wisdom and learning attracting crowds to her lectures. Even the great orator and poet, the Bishop Synesius, was content to sit at her feet, and Orestes often consulted her in his political difficulties. She was the idol of the young men of Alexandria, but kept all her lovers at a distance, devoting herself to the care of her old father, Theon, a well-known mathematician. After the death of Ammonius a rumour was spread—by whom originated it is impossible to say, but Cyril himself has been accused—to the effect that the only obstacle to a reconciliation between the Archbishop and the Governor was the influence of Hypatia. In the state of excitement then prevailing a whisper was enough. A mob of monks and priests, led by a lay-reader named Peter, stopped Hypatia's carriage in the street, tore her from it, and dragged her to the church, at the entrance to which she was literally torn to pieces, Cyril, who even at the last might have rescued her if he would, moving not a finger to save her.

Terrible as was this crime, and undoubted as was the share taken in it by the Patriarch, it did not, strange to say, lessen his influence in Alexandria, and, rare fact in that day of sudden changes, he retained his position as Patriarch, in spite of having been twice formally deposed by the Emperor, until his death in 444. The latter part of his life was spent in a bitter persecution of Nestorius, the founder of an important sect, who had refused to accept the title given by St. Cyril,

at the Council of Ephesus, to the Blessed Virgin of Θεοδοχος, or the Mother of God, declaring that she was only *χριστοτοκος*, or the mother of Christ the man. Nestorius himself was banished, and died miserably in exile; but his followers are still very numerous in the East, although the Θεοδοχος doctrine was upheld by the successors of Cyril, who agreed with him in wishing that those who, as they expressed it, 'divided Christ' should be 'divided with the sword, hewn in pieces, burnt alive,' falsifying the prophecy of Theodoret, when he heard of the death of the Patriarch, 'Envy is dead, and heresy is buried with her.'

St. Cyril of Alexandria, in spite of all his faults, is revered as one of the greatest champions of the orthodox Church. He is honoured with the titles of the Doctor of the Incarnation and the Doctor of the World. Pope Celestine spoke of him as the 'generous defender of the Church and faith, the Catholic doctor,' and his extant works, which include his 'Defence of Christianity against the Emperor Julian the Apostate,' in ten books, are held in very high esteem by theologians, although their style is somewhat involved, their author having been a more eloquent speaker than writer.

St. Cyril is sometimes associated in art with the four great Greek Fathers, from whom he is distinguished by the cap, hood, or veil he wears on his head. His most noteworthy symbol is a Group of the Virgin and Child introduced above his head, and he sometimes holds a scroll bearing the words—a quotation from one of his homilies—'Above all, a Virgin without sin or blemish,' or an open book on one leaf of which is written Θεοδοχος, both in allusion to the doctrine he defended so vigorously in his lifetime. A pen, the constant emblem of a writer, is generally given to him, and in some old Greek MSS., he is represented flinging books into a brazier, in memory of his condemnation of the works of Nestorius.

CHAPTER XV

THE FOUR GREAT LATIN FATHERS

IN the history of the Western Church the four Latin Fathers, Saints Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory the Great, occupy an exceptionally high position as exponents of doctrine, and their authority is accepted to a greater or less extent by Christians of every creed. Whilst the Evangelists and Apostles were recognised from the very earliest time as the chief pillars of the spiritual Church, whose builder and maker was the Son of God, the Fathers or doctors were looked upon as their heirs, the main props of the Church militant still on earth. It was their mission to preserve uninjured, in the midst of the fierce conflicts of opinion which prevailed in the third and fourth centuries, the priceless gem of the truth as it was in Jesus, and to crystallize in definite form the various elements of which that gem consisted. Their writings were venerated as those of men whose holy lives had brought them into touch with the Divine, and as time went on this veneration increased to so great an extent that direct inspiration from on high was claimed for them. As a result they gradually became ranked in the popular imagination with the Evangelists themselves; the devotion engendered for them was reflected in art, and they were often grouped with the writers of the Gospels in ecclesiastical decoration and devotional pictures. Moreover, the symbols belonging of right to the Evangelists were sometimes given also to their successors, a misappropriation which has resulted in a good deal of confusion. In mediæval times this confusion became very marked, and it continued to prevail to a greater or less extent until the end of the seventeenth century. To quote but two examples from widely different sources: in the Chronicle of Nuremberg the eagle of St. John is given to St. Gregory the Great, and the bull of St. Luke to St. Ambrose; whilst in a painting by Pier Francesco Sacchi, now in the Louvre, St. Augustine has the eagle, and St. Gregory the bull, the lion of St. Mark is given to St. Ambrose, and the angel of St. Matthew to St. Jerome. The dove, the emblem of Divine inspiration, whispers in the ear of St. Gregory alone, although each of the four doctors has the halo of sainthood.



Hanfstaengl photo]

[*Staedel Institute, Frankfort*

THE FOUR LATIN FATHERS

By Il Moretto

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It has been suggested that the Italian artist was innocent of any idea of plagiarism, but merely meant to suggest the character of his subjects by the introduction of the symbolic animals: the lofty dignity of St. Augustine justifying his comparison with an eagle; the self-denying purity of St. Jerome his association with an angel; the fearless courage of St. Ambrose in his conflict with the Emperor Theodosius suggesting that of the lion; and the dogged perseverance of St. Gregory in spite of all opposition resembling the tenacity of a bull.

The grouping together of the Evangelists and the Latin Fathers has been variously interpreted, some looking upon it merely as generally suggestive of their almost equal rank as teachers, others as symbolic of the fact that the latter were the interpreters of the former. Thus, St. Jerome is associated with St. Matthew because of his commentary on that Evangelist's Gospel; St. Augustine with St. John because he dwelt especially on the words of the beloved disciple; St. Ambrose with St. Luke because he quoted so often from him; and St. Gregory with St. Mark for a similar reason, although, as a matter of fact, he referred as constantly to the other three Gospels.

It is as pillars of the Church that the Latin doctors appear behind the Evangelists in the 'Coronation of the Virgin' by Antonio da Murano and Joannes Vivarini, now in the Venice Academy, in the frescoes of Luini at Saronno, and in the 'Paradiso' of Tintoretto in the Doge's Palace, Venice; it is as interpreters of the Evangelists that they are introduced by Coreggio in the beautiful fresco of the 'Ascension' in the dome of S. Giovanni Evangelista at Parma. In the fresco of the 'Disputa' in the Camera della Segnatura of the Vatican, Raphael has included the four Latin doctors amongst the crowd of learned men in the lower portion of the picture, marking their high rank by representing them as the only seated figures. In a quaint engraving called the 'Triumph of Christ,' long erroneously said to be after Titian, and evidently dating from his time, though certainly not by him, the four Evangelists are dragging along a chariot in which the Redeemer is seated, whilst the four doctors, each at one of the wheels, are aiding them by pushing with all their strength.

In a very fine 'Madonna Enthroned with Saints,' by Giovanni and Antonio Vivarini, now in the Venice Academy, the four

doctors are grouped two on each side of the Virgin. In a very original drawing of the 'Dispute in the Temple,' and in the beautiful painting of the same subject by Il Moretto, now in the Staedel Institute at Frankfort, Saints Ambrose and Augustine stand on the steps of the throne, St. Gregory is seated below, and St. Jerome alone kneels, pointing to a passage in a book held open by St. Gregory.

In a beautiful drawing, now at Venice, by Giovanni da Udine, of the 'Dispute in the Temple,' Saints Jerome, Ambrose, Augustine, and Gregory are introduced making notes on the discussion between the Jewish doctors and the youthful Redeemer, who is seated on a throne in their midst. Other masters occasionally represented the Fathers communing together over various points of doctrine, and some went so far as to suggest their consideration of dogmas which were not evolved until long after their time. In a painting by Dosso Dossi, now in the Dresden Gallery, for instance, God the Father is seen laying one hand on the head of the kneeling Virgin, whilst St. Jerome gazes reverently up at the vision, and the other three doctors, who are unable or unwilling to see it, continue their meditations unmoved, pen and tablet in hand. In a similar composition by Guido Reni, now in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, the Vision of St. Jerome is shared by St. Ambrose, but their companions are blind to it.

Rubens, to whom the noble characters of the four great doctors, especially that of St. Jerome, appealed with special force, introduced them in his wonderful series of tapestries of the 'Triumph of the Eucharist' now in the Dominican Convent of the Royal Ladies, at Loeches, near Madrid, for which the original sketches are in the Prado Museum, and in a fine oil-painting in the Duke of Westminster's collection, called the 'Defence of the Eucharist,' the same master has represented St. Jerome and St. Gregory arguing eagerly together, whilst the other two Fathers listen attentively.

The various symbols and attributes of the four great leaders of thought in the West in the fourth century will be described and explained in the separate articles relating to each of them; but it may be added here, for the sake of completeness, that when they are grouped together they generally wear their robes of office, and hold a book and a church, to denote their positions as defenders of the faith. St. Jerome, who on

account of his great learning takes first rank amongst the doctors, wears the crimson robes and red hat of a Cardinal, although he certainly never attained the dignity they imply. St. Gregory wears the tiara and pontifical robes, whilst Saints Augustine and Ambrose are in the ordinary vestments of Bishops, the former sometimes holding a knotted scourge in his right hand, in token of his self-inflicted penance, the latter a flaming heart, pierced with an arrow, in allusion to his own words : ‘ Sagittaveras tu cor nostrum charitate tua.’*

CHAPTER XVI

ST. JEROME

ST. JEROME, who as the founder of monachism in the West and author of the translation of the Scriptures into Latin known as the Vulgate, takes precedence of the other Fathers, was born about the middle of the fourth century, though exactly at what date is not known, at Stridonium, supposed to have occupied the site of the present Sdrigni, on the borders of Dalmatia and Pannonia. The son of Christian parents of high position, he received a good education, having been sent to Rome after his father had thoroughly grounded him in the principles of religion and the elements of secular knowledge. In the capital the young Jerome worked under the celebrated heathen teachers Victorinus the rhetorician and Donatus the grammarian, making rapid progress in learning, but, unfortunately, losing much of his early innocence through the evil example of his fellow-students. Though he was baptized whilst at Rome, he remained a Christian in name only, and when his education was completed, he took up the legal profession ; his one aim seeming to have been to win worldly success. Not until he had made a great reputation as an orator and travelled much in quest of earthly knowledge were his eyes opened to the true aims of life. He must have been past thirty before a dangerous illness, from which he recovered as by a miracle, led to his giving up all his self-indulgence to devote

* Thou hadst pierced my heart with Thy love.

himself to the service of God alone. According to some, it was at Antioch that the great change took place, whilst others claim that the conversion of St. Jerome—for conversion it was—came about at Triers, then a celebrated seat of learning, whither he had gone with a view to enriching his library with copies of the precious manuscripts there preserved. In any case, it seems to have been about 374 that he withdrew from the world to the desert of Chalcis, where he spent four years in lonely penitence, inflicting such terrible sufferings upon himself that his body never fully recovered from their effects, although his soul emerged from them strengthened and purified. St. Jerome has given a vivid description of the anguish through which he passed, and of the temptations with which he was assailed, in his letters to the disciples who later gathered about him. ‘In the remotest part of a wild desert,’ he says, ‘which strikes with horror and terror even the monks that inhabit it, I seemed to myself to be in the midst of the delights and assemblies of Rome. I loved solitude, that in the bitterness of my soul, I might more freely bewail my miseries and call upon my Saviour. My emaciated limbs were covered with sackcloth, my skin was parched dry and black, and my flesh was almost wasted away. The days I passed in tears and groans, and when sleep over-powered me against my will, I cast my wearied bones, which hardly hung together, upon the bare ground, not so properly to give them rest, as to torture myself. . . . My face was pale with fasting; yet my will felt violent assaults of irregular desires. . . . I feared the very cell in which I lived. . . . I went alone into the most secret parts of the wilderness;’ and so on for many pages of heart-rending details, leading up, however, to the final triumphant assurance of victory, for he who, to quote his own touching words again, had ‘thrown himself at the feet of Jesus, watering them with his tears,’ in despairing dread of condemnation, found himself at last ‘amidst the choirs of angels, singing with them to God.’

Fortunately, what may perhaps be called the delirium of holiness, in which the penitent Saint lived in the wilderness, was succeeded by the calm of worldly wisdom, and St. Jerome resolved, now that he had won the great treasure of assured forgiveness, to return to the world, there, if possible, to share with others the peace he had secured for himself. In 379 he

was ordained priest at Antioch, and went thence to Constantinople, where he became the close friend of St. Gregory Nazianzus, who was in every respect a kindred spirit. The two took counsel together on the schism with which the Church was then torn, and in 382, after the Archbishop had, to quote his own words, resigned the see 'to lay the storm he had not excited,' St. Jerome went to Rome with Saints Paulinus and Epiphanius to attend a Council convened by Pope Damasus to consider what steps should be taken to combat the heresy which was eating like a canker into the very heart of religion. St. Jerome had already had some correspondence with the Pope on the subject, and he had not been long in Rome before he became the chief adviser of His Holiness, who persuaded him to remain with him as his secretary after the meeting of the Bishops broke up. Reluctantly St. Jerome gave up much of his leisure to his new duties and to preaching to crowded audiences in the churches of the capital. His ideal was still the same, but he was compelled to recognise that his work was now in the world, not in the desert, and by his great eloquence he won many to his own way of thinking, so that when, three years later, he felt free to leave the city, he was accompanied by many men and women of noble birth, who wished to devote their whole lives to the service of God.

It had ever been the great ambition of St. Jerome to end his life in Palestine, and he now went to Bethlehem, where he founded a monastery, in which he settled down to complete his translation of the Bible and other literary labours. From this retreat he sent forth many beautiful letters, and also, unfortunately for his memory, many bitter invectives against his enemies, especially against the Pelagians, for whom he had conceived an unrelenting hatred, returned with such hearty goodwill that for two whole years he was compelled to hide in a remote district of the desert from those who sought to slay him. During this concealment, with its necessary hardships, St. Jerome was taken ill, and though he lingered for two whole years after his return to his beloved monastery, he remained an invalid until his death on September 30, 420. When he felt the end approaching, he asked some of his monks to carry him into the chapel, where he peacefully expired, after having reverently received the last Sacraments.

He was buried in a vault of the monastery, but his remains were translated later to the Church of S. Maria Maggiore at Rome.

To explain the constant association of a lion with St. Jerome, the following quaint and touching legend is told: One day when the Father was sitting with his monks inside his monastery at Bethlehem, a lion approached him, limping on three legs, and holding up the fourth as if in pain. The monks fled in terror, but St. Jerome remained quietly seated, and the great beast came up to him. Then the holy Father saw that the paw was pierced with a great thorn, and with much difficulty he drew the thorn out of the wound, which he carefully bathed and dressed, the lion remaining perfectly quiescent the while. St. Jerome, of course, expected his strange visitor to retire now that he had obtained what he came for, but the lion would not leave him, and became henceforth his most faithful companion. St. Jerome, who allowed no one in his service to be idle, set him to work to escort a donkey to and from the forest to bring firewood for the convent. Every day for many months the lion and the ass went forth and returned together, but on one occasion the king of the beasts is said to have fallen asleep by the way, and some travellers, passing when he was off guard, took away the donkey with the load of wood. When the lion awoke and found his companion gone, he was filled with remorse, and returned alone to his master with drooping head and tail, like a dog who knows he has done wrong. St. Jerome, imagining that the lion had eaten the donkey, scolded him well, and ordered him henceforth to do the work alone. The poor lion, who seems to have understood all that was said to him, though he could not reply intelligibly, submitted to be made a beast of burden, until one day he happened to meet the very merchants who had stolen the donkey, and recognised his old friend leading a train of camels, as was the custom in those days. To the fear and dismay of the whole caravan, the angry lion dashed in amongst the camels, and drove them before him into the gates of the monastery. The terrified robbers came trooping in behind, and, convinced that their crime was discovered, entreated St. Jerome to forgive them. Pardon was granted, and the merchants withdrew, full of reverence for the man who had a monarch of the desert to serve him. The lion



[*Royal Academy, London*

ST. JEROME IN THE DESERT

By Lord Leighton

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was restored to his old position, and he and his friend the donkey worked together again for many years.

Various other explanations have been given of the introduction of the lion in pictures of St. Jerome. As is well known, a lion is the general symbol of those who retire to the desert from the world, as well as of all who keep vigil at night, because of the popular belief that lions sleep with their eyes open. There was, moreover, something of the lion in the sturdy, uncompromising character of St. Jerome, whom no worldly honours could seduce from the path he considered right, and who by sheer force of will conquered even the fear of death, which, he confesses, sometimes assailed him. In any case, the lion became inseparably connected with St. Jerome; the incident of the extraction of the thorn is the subject of many charming mediæval miniatures, notably of several preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale of Paris, and whether the Saint is represented in his study, as in the quaint fifteenth-century Chronicle of Nuremberg, or kneeling alone in the desert, his faithful lion is ever beside him.

Other more or less constant attributes of St. Jerome, who is generally represented as an old man with bald head and a long beard, are the Cardinal's robes and hat, the use of which is a manifest anachronism. The term Cardinal was, no doubt, employed at a very early date to designate any priest regularly inducted into a benefice, and about the eighth century it became restricted to the clergy of a cathedral, the Bishop being looked upon as the *cardo*, or hinge, on which the diocese turned, but it was not until the time of Pius V. that the title became the exclusive distinction of the counsellors of the Pope, whose authority was second to his alone. The Cardinal's robes were probably given to St. Jerome because he acted at one time as secretary to Pope Damasus, or, according to Lope de Vega, who has made the 'Cardinal of Bethlehem' the hero of one of his sacred dramas, to Pope St. Liberius. Be that as it may, the robes have become St. Jerome's by right of long tradition, and even when, as is sometimes the case, robes of any kind are dispensed with, and the 'Cardinal of Bethlehem' kneels almost naked in the wilderness, his red hat hangs on a peg in his cell or lies on the ground beside him. Sometimes the equally anachronistic detail of a pair of spectacles is given to St. Jerome, probably in allusion to his clearness of spiritual

vision; and occasionally, as in a well-known engraving by Dürer, he kneels before a crucifix, although that emblem of devotion did not come into use until some centuries after his death, or, as in another old engraving, he uses a rosary, and has a bénitier of holy water beside him. The fox as an emblem of wisdom, with the hare, the stag, the partridge, and other wild animals of the desert, are often introduced in the background of pictures of St. Jerome doing penance, and sometimes groups of beautiful women, suggestive of the temptations to which the Saint was exposed, are seen dancing near him. A stone either held in his hand, in token of the penance he inflicted on himself, or resting on the open page of his book, is another very constant emblem of St. Jerome; the pen, so often given to those who taught by their writings, is looked upon as a very special attribute of the great Latin Father in his character of the first historian of the Church; the death's head and cross-bones, placed by many artists at his feet, are supposed to be in allusion to his conquered fear of death, or to the way in which he dwelt on the Last Judgment in his discourses; and the trumpet he sometimes holds has probably a somewhat similar meaning, although it was long supposed to have reference to the words erroneously attributed to him: 'Whether I eat or whether I drink, or whatever I do, I seem to hear ringing in my ears the terrible trumpet, crying, Arise, ye dead, and come to judgment!'

St. Jerome is looked upon as their spiritual head by the Hieronymites, whose Order grew out of that of St. Francis in the thirteenth century, and as translator of the Holy Scriptures he is supposed to be the special protector of theological students. His figure is therefore introduced in many convents and colleges, as well as in countless chapels and churches, so that his general appearance is as familiar as is that of any one of the Evangelists, whose successor he was supposed to be.

There is a quaint old Gothic figure representing St. Jerome in his Cardinal's robes, with his lion beside him, in Henry VII.'s Chapel at Westminster, and the wooden statue by Donatello in the Faenza Gallery, in spite of its humble material, is full of virile force and spiritual expression. The noble character of the Saint has also been well interpreted in marble by Alessandro Vittoria, whose Statue in the Cathedral of Siena is said to be a portrait of Titian in extreme old age; by Tullio Lombardo,



[*Berlin Gallery*
SAINTS JEROME, CLARA, AND MARY MAGDALENE]

By Luca Signorelli

To face p. 150

whose 'St. Jerome' in the Frari Church, Venice, is one of his best works ; and by Mino da Fiesole, the author of a Statue of the Saint now in S. Pietro at Perugia, and also of a series of bas-reliefs representing scenes from the Life of St. Jerome adorning the altar in S. Maria Maggiore, Rome, beneath which rest the remains of the great doctor.

It early became customary to introduce St. Jerome amongst the attendant Saints in the great scenes from the lives of Christ and of the Blessed Virgin. He appears with St. Francis in the beautiful bas-relief of the 'Nativity' in S. Francesco at Barga, and in that of the Coronation of the Virgin in S. Maria degli Angeli at Rocca, near Assisi, both by Luca della Robbia ; in Fra Angelico's great 'Crucifixion' in S. Marco, Florence, he kneels not far from St. Dominic, gazing up at the cross in rapt devotion. In Perugino's rendering of the same subject in the Florence Academy, St. Jerome and his lion are on the right of the cross, opposite to the Blessed Virgin ; in Giovanni Santi's 'Pietà' in S. Domenico at Pagli he and St. Bonaventura look on at the mourning over the dead Christ ; and on the predella of the 'Coronation of the Virgin' by Botticelli, in the Florence Academy, St. Jerome is seen in his study and St. Augustine at Patmos on one side of the central subject.

Francia, who seems to have had a special predilection for the hermit Father, introduced him kneeling at the foot of the cross with the Blessed Virgin, St. John and St. Francis, in the beautiful niello Pax preserved in the Bologna Gallery ; in the 'Calcina Altar-piece,' now in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, St. Jerome is opposite to St. Lawrence ; and in the 'Presentation in the Temple' in the Capitoline Gallery at Rome, long attributed to Francia, but now supposed by some critics to be by Fra Bartolommeo, St. Jerome with his lion is one of the many spectators of the scene.

To Signorelli also the character of St. Jerome appealed with peculiar fascination. In the 'Dead Christ upheld by Angels,' in S. Niccolo, Cortona, the Latin Father, a noble-looking old man, kneels on one knee opposite to St. Francis ; and in the great Ancona in the National Gallery, London, he is introduced in his Cardinal's robes, with his lion at his feet, amongst the fine full-length figures of Saints in the upper tier. In the Venice Academy is preserved a very fine painting on wood by Crivelli of Saints Jerome and Augustine, the

former holding a model of a church and two heavy volumes in his right hand, whilst his lion, the left paw pierced with an arrow, looks up at him as if asking for help; and in the Berlin Gallery are preserved the wings of an Altar-piece, on one of which a very beautiful St. Jerome, nude but for some loose drapery, kneels beside Saints Clara and Mary Magdalene.

In the celebrated 'Madonna della Pesce' of Raphael, now in the Prado Museum, Madrid, the Holy Child lays His hand caressingly on the book held by the kneeling St. Jerome, and in Correggio's famous 'Il Giorno,' or 'Madonna of St. Jerome,' in the Parma Gallery, the great doctor of the Church, a magnificent figure towering above the Blessed Virgin and her attendant angel, is presenting his translation of the Holy Scriptures to the Divine Child. He also takes an important place in many other well-known Madonna pictures, such as those by Montagna, the Vivarini, Giovanni Bellini, Paolo Veronese, and Tintoretto, all in the Venice Academy, and, above all, that by Giovanni Bellini in S. Zaccaria, Venice.

Occasionally, as in the 'St. Jerome introducing Charles V. into Paradise,' by Luca Giordano, in the Escorial Palace, Madrid; the great Altar-piece of 1511 by Wohlgemuth, in the Vienna Gallery; and that by Giovanni Bellini in S. Giovanni Crisostomo, Venice, St. Jerome is the principal figure. In the first he is more than an earthly Saint: he has become a mediator and intercessor, able to control the fate after death of the mighty ones of this world; in the second, a very characteristic German work, he stands upon a lofty throne, his hand resting on the head of a lion rampant, and in the third, the last signed painting of Giovanni Bellini, he is seated reading, with St. Augustine on one side and St. Christopher on the other.

Very numerous and varied also are the representations of scenes from the life and legend of St. Jerome, and in many Hieronymite convents incidents, such as the Blessed Virgin giving him the Cardinal's hat, are added, for which there is scant foundation either in legend or tradition. The Penance of St. Jerome has been almost as favourite a subject with artists as that of St. Mary Magdalene, whilst pictures and engravings of him alone in his cell or praying in the wilderness abound, not only in Italy and Spain, but also in Germany. In the Brera Gallery, Milan, is a very fine 'Penance' by Titian, who often chose it as his theme, in

which St. Jerome, stone in hand and with his lion beside him, kneels opposite to a cross roughly carved in the living rock. In a beautiful engraving, now very rare, Albrecht Dürer treated the subject in much the same way. Raphael in one of his early 'Crucifixions' introduced St. Jerome as a penitent kneeling with a stone in his hand ready to begin his self-torture, and, to quote a famous modern example, Lord Leighton represented him kneeling at the foot of a cross in an agony of prayer, his lion on a rock near by.

In the National Gallery, London, there is a beautiful painting by Domenichino of St. Jerome in his cell listening to the angel, with his lion crouching at his feet, and his red robe, Cardinal's hat, and the symbolic skull on a rock beside him, and in the Church of the Ognisanti, Florence, is a fine fresco by Ghirlandajo of the same subject, in which the Father is writing at a plank laid across two pieces of rock. More celebrated than either of these, however, are the engraving by Lucas van Leyden, in which the lion is licking his master's feet, and that after Dürer known as 'St. Jerome in his Chamber,' in which the Saint is writing in a beautiful room, with his Cardinal's hat hanging on a peg behind him, and his lion and the fox, symbolic of his wisdom, asleep on the ground. Another German master, Lucas Cranach, painted his patron, Albert of Brandenburg, as St. Jerome, whom he represented as writing in the open air, wearing his Cardinal's robes, and with a group of wild animals about him, including a lion, a hare, a partridge, and a fawn. Very beautiful also are the 'St. Jerome in Prayer' by Savaldo, in the Layard collection at Venice; the same subject by Paolo Veronese in S. Andrea, Venice; the St. Jerome alone, by Quintin Matsys in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence; the 'St. Jerome praying' by Il Moretto, in S. Clemente, Brescia; the single figure by Titian in the Hermitage, St. Petersburg; and the exquisite engraving by Albrecht Dürer known as 'St. Jerome with the Willow.'

In a quaint picture ascribed to Juan de Valdes Leal, in the Museum of Seville, St. Jerome is represented laying down the law to some Jewish rabbis, each of whom has a demon peeping over his shoulder. Ribera has given a very forcible rendering of the so-called 'Vision of St. Jerome,' in which the Saint is pausing in his writing to listen to the blast of the trumpet summoning the dead to judgment; and Antonio Pereda, in a

painting in the Prado Gallery, Madrid, goes even further, surrounding the awe-struck Saint with spirits rising in answer to the terrible summons.

In his beautiful but much-defaced frescoes in S. Onofrio, Florence, Domenichino represented St. Jerome praying against temptation, whilst beautiful nymphs are dancing in a circle in the background; and in another scene the Saint is patiently enduring a scourging from an angel, in punishment for his love of heathen writings, a copy of Cicero lying at his feet pointing the moral. In the National Gallery, London, is a very beautiful painting, by the same master, of St. Jerome listening to an angel dictating; Parmigiano, in a fine work in the same collection, has given a poetic rendering of yet another supposed vision of the popular Saint, in which he lies asleep on the ground, and the Blessed Virgin with the Holy Child appear in the sky above him; and in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, is a very dramatic rendering of the 'Vision of St. Jerome' by Ribera.

In S. Giorgio degli Schiavoni, Venice, are three beautiful scenes from the life of St. Jerome by Carpaccio: the Meeting between him and his lion; the Saint in his study, remarkable for the way in which the light is managed; and his Death, in which many portraits of contemporaries of the artist are introduced amongst the mourners. In the frescoes of the Venuto Chapel in S. Maria del Popolo, Rome, Pinturicchio introduced several incidents from the chequered career of St. Jerome, including a Visit from the other three Fathers, and an Interview between him and an infidel in the presence of a number of spectators. A specially beautiful representation of the Death of St. Jerome is that by Filippo Lippi, in the Duomo of Prato, in which the grief of the weeping brethren about the bier is brought out with almost painful vividness, whilst above the Blessed Virgin with attendant angels are awaiting to receive the soul of the departing Saint. The Last Communion of the great teacher has also been the subject of many fine paintings, of which that by Domenichino, now in the Vatican Gallery, where it hangs opposite to the 'Transfiguration' by Raphael, is considered the best. In it the dying Saint is being placed by his weeping disciples in the chapel of his monastery at Bethlehem, St. Paula kisses his hand, and four angels look down from above, as the priest in ornate robes, at whom St. Jerome gazes with dim eyes full of yearning rever-



Alinari photo.]

[*Duomo, Prato*

THE DEATH OF ST. JEROME

By Fra Filippo Lippi

ence, approaches with the sacred elements. Very beautiful also are the painting of the same subject by Agostino Caracci, in which the lion is introduced, licking the feet of his dying master; and the engraving by an unknown hand, dated 1614, representing the Saint in his cell after the last Sacraments have been administered, pressing the Gospel and crucifix to his breast, whilst angels are bearing his soul to heaven and the faithful lion is howling with grief.

CHAPTER XVII

ST. AMBROSE

ST. AMBROSE, who is justly considered one of the greatest men of his time—for, unlike St. Jerome, he knew how to temper zeal with discretion, and, unlike St. Augustine, he had no bitter memories of past errors to lessen his power for good—was born about 340, probably at Treves. He was the youngest of a family of three children, and his father, a man of high culture, was Prefect of Gaul. It is related that one day, when the little Ambrose was asleep in his cradle, a swarm of bees settled upon his face, and when the attendants were about to drive them away, the Prefect interfered, declaring that they would do the little one no harm, but were a token of the Divine favour. The bees hovered about the child for a few minutes, and then flew away, without having stung him, soaring, it is said, to a great height before they disappeared.

A similar story is told, as is well known, of Plato and of Pindar; but that the incident is no mere later tradition evolved after the celebrity it was supposed to prophesy had become an accomplished fact, is proved by allusions to it in contemporary writings, notably in a letter from the secretary Paulinus to St. Augustine. It is doubtful whether the parents of St. Ambrose were Christians or not; but the probability is that they were, for their daughter Marcellina became a nun, and there is no record of her conversion. In any case, Ambrose and his brother Satyrus received an excellent education, although their father died when they were still children. Their mother, whose name has unfortunately not been pre-

served, took them to Rome, where they studied under the best masters of the day, and Ambrose distinguished himself so much that he attracted the notice of the leading men at Court. After following the legal profession for a few years with brilliant success, Ambrose was made Prefect of Upper Italy and Milan by the Emperor Valentinian I.; and it is related that when he was about to start on his journey to take up his new dignity, the magistrate Protus, whose successor he had been, said to him : ' Go thy way, and govern rather as a Bishop than a Judge.'

Arrived at Milan, which he intended to make his headquarters, the young governor found the city torn with dissensions between the Catholics and Arians, but by his wisdom and tact he managed to restore at least a semblance of peace. He soon became greatly beloved, and was consulted eagerly in their difficulties by all classes of the community. In 374, when St. Ambrose was about thirty-four years old, the Bishop of Milan died, and immediately a great tumult arose in the city, the Arians wishing to elect a candidate who favoured them, the Catholics espousing the cause of another. It seemed likely that a civil war would break out, and a fierce quarrel was going on in the church in which the electors had assembled, when St. Ambrose forced his way in, ascended the pulpit, and obtained silence. He then uttered a remarkable oration, the audience listening in enthralled attention until, just as he was ending his discourse, a child, who, according to one version of the legend, was Jesus Himself, suddenly cried out ' Ambrose Bishop!' thus suggesting a solution of the difficulty, which was hailed with enthusiasm by both parties. The cry, ' Ambrose Bishop!' was taken up by all present, and the Prefect tried in vain to make his protest heard. He wished to plead that he had not yet been baptized, that he had already work enough to do; but he was compelled to desist, and left the church followed by a large crowd acclaiming his election. The popular desire was endorsed by the Emperor, who presently sent his messenger to Milan with a letter to St. Ambrose, commanding him to yield. Meanwhile the Prefect was doing his best to turn the tide, and it is even said that he caused certain criminals who were brought before him as judge to be tortured, in the hope of proving that he was unfit to be a Bishop. When he heard of the arrival of the Emperor's envoy he stole away at night, intending to take refuge at Pavia, but

he lost his way, and in the morning found himself still close to Milan. He re-entered the city, and induced a senator named Leontius to hide him, but when the Pope seconded the orders of the Emperor by declaring it a crime to aid the fugitive to escape, the Prefect's retreat was betrayed by his host. St. Ambrose now realized that it was his duty to submit; he was baptized, and eight days later consecrated Bishop of Milan.

The first care of the new Bishop was to qualify himself for his high office. He began by distributing to the Church and the poor all he possessed, except a certain sum he set aside for the maintenance of his sister; and having put all his worldly affairs into the hands of his brother Satyrus, he set to work to study the Scriptures and the writings of accredited authorities. In these studies he was, it is said, greatly assisted by the Roman presbyter Simplicianus, who later succeeded him as Bishop, but in the active work of his office he had hardly any help, receiving all, of whatever rank, himself, and quickly converting Milan from a turbulent city into one of the most peaceful towns of Italy. Arians and Catholics alike looked upon St. Ambrose as their own pastor, and abode by his decisions in a truly remarkable manner. St. Augustine, who was one of his great admirers, relates that often when he went to the palace he found the holy Bishop 'so overwhelmed with business, or so intent in the few moments he was able to steal for himself,' that his visitor was not even perceived by him, 'whom out of mere pity he durst not interrupt.'

On the death of Valentinian I., Gratian, his elder son, succeeded him, and St. Ambrose became chief adviser of the young monarch, who, though not an able ruler, was an earnest Christian. 'Gratian,' says Gibbon, 'loved and revered the Bishop as a father, and the celebrated treatise on the Trinity was written specially for his guidance.' When Gratian was murdered in 383, and his stepmother, Justina, trembled for her own safety and that of her young son, St. Ambrose was mainly instrumental in preventing further bloodshed, and on the accession of Valentinian II. he resisted every effort of the Empress-mother to seduce him from what he considered the right path. Justina was a bigoted Arian, and she did her utmost to instil her own principles into the mind of her son. Moreover, she had very exalted notions on the subject of the supremacy of the State, and wished to make the Church

altogether subservient to it. She even went so far as to suggest to St. Ambrose that he should give up one of the churches in Milan for the use of her favourite sect, pleading the right of the Emperor to worship God publicly in his own way. In his reply to her the Bishop struck the keynote of his later behaviour to Theodosius. The palaces of the earth, he said, might indeed belong to Cæsar, but the churches were the houses of God, and within the limits of his diocese he himself, as the lawful successor of the Apostles, was the only minister of God. Every attempt to win his consent to a conference on the subject was in vain : he did not consider the matter open to discussion. After a long and bitter quarrel between St. Ambrose and the Empress, sentence of banishment was pronounced upon the Bishop, but he boldly refused to obey, and the people supported him in his refusal, guarding him wherever he went, and surrounding the church during the services.

It was whilst this contest with the temporal power was at its height that the discovery took place of the remains of the martyrs, Saints Protasius and Gervasius, as related in the account of their lives.* The place where the bodies had been buried is said to have been revealed to St. Ambrose in a dream, when he was overtaken by sleep at his prayers in a church dedicated to Saints Nabor and Celsus. When he awoke he at once ordered the pavement of the church to be removed, and beneath it were found two perfect skeletons of young men, with the heads severed from the bodies. The sacred relics were removed with great ceremony to the cathedral, and on the way many miracles of healing are said to have taken place, including the restoration of the sight of a blind man. The effect on the minds of the populace of all these wonders was immense. Justina and the Emperor, seeing how useless it was to contend against one in such favour with God and man, as St. Ambrose evidently was, ceased their persecution, and a hollow peace was patched up between the Church and State. Then ensued the invasion of Maximus, the murderer of the late Emperor Gratian, who quickly dispersed the Imperial troops, and on the flight of Justina with her son would gladly have cemented an alliance with St. Ambrose. The Bishop, however, refused to have anything to do with a man whose

* 'The Saints in Christian Art,' vol. i., pp. 197, 198.



Alinari photo]

[*Church of the Frari, Venice*

ST. AMBROSE ENTHRONED

By Alvise Vivarini

hands were stained with the blood of Gratian, and it was not until Maximus had been deposed, and succeeded by Theodosius, that cordial relations were again established between the temporal and spiritual powers. Theodosius, a man of noble character, whose crimes and errors were the result rather of a hasty temper than of moral depravity, soon conceived a great affection for St. Ambrose, whose advice he often followed in preference to that of his own ministers. Again and again the Bishop had successfully interfered in favour of clemency to the condemned, and it was with a shock of horror that he heard of the terrible massacre at Thessalonica, which had been ordered by Theodosius in revenge for the murder by the populace of one of his generals. That the general had brought his fate on himself by his want of tact in dealing with the people was not allowed to weigh with the Emperor in meting out his vengeance. In his name the citizens of Thessalonica were invited to a great entertainment at the circus, and when all the seats were occupied, a preconcerted signal was given to the soldiers waiting outside, who rushed in and slew fifteen hundred, sparing neither age nor sex.

When St. Ambrose heard the dreadful news, he was filled with horror and indignation. Fearing he should have to meet Theodosius before he had resolved on what it was best for him to do, he withdrew from Milan to the country, there to seek guidance from on high in solitary prayer. Again it is said direct inspiration came to him in a dream, Christ Himself appearing to tell His representative on earth that the Emperor must not be allowed to approach the Holy Table, or touch the sacred elements with hands polluted by the blood of the innocent. The Bishop's duty was now clear. He went back to Milan and wrote to Theodosius, telling him that he must not venture to approach the altar until he had made full expiation for his crimes.

The Emperor, who could not believe that his old friend really meant to excommunicate him, contented himself with a general expression of regret, and on the next festival of the Church he came as usual with all his Court to receive the Holy Communion. St. Ambrose, however, who had been warned of his approach, met him in the porch and forbade him to enter, telling him to depart, and not to aggravate his former crime by a second offence. In vain the Emperor entreated forgiveness,

pleading that David too had sinned and been pardoned, to which St. Ambrose replied, 'Him whom you have imitated in sinning, imitate also in repentance.' Strange to say, Theodosius submitted, and turning sadly away, he retired to his palace, where he spent the next eight months in doing penance. At the end of that time he again presented himself at the church porch, to be again repulsed, and it was not until he had done public penance, lying prostrate with other offenders on the pavement outside the church, that the Bishop at last consented to give him absolution or to allow him to receive the Blessed Sacrament.

The fact that, after he had been thus put to shame in the presence of his subjects, Theodosius still remained attached to his stern Bishop speaks volumes for the nobility of his character. Later the Emperor himself voluntarily refrained from approaching the altar, because he was stained with blood, though in a just and necessary war. In fact, the victory of the Church was complete; the submission of the temporal power was a voluntary one, the heart as well as the body having been won over to the cause of Christ. Theodosius died in the arms of St. Ambrose in 395, and the Bishop followed him to the grave two years later, having done more than any one man to consolidate the ecclesiastical power in Italy. In minor details also his influence is still felt, for he it was who gave to Church ceremonial the dignity and magnificence which has ever since distinguished it, especially in Italy, and he effected a complete reform in sacred music. The Ambrosian Chant, named after him, was the earliest attempt at the introduction of any real system, and although it is a mistake to consider him, as some have done, the author of the *Te Deum*, many well-known hymns in use in the Western Church, notably 'Again the Lord's own day is here,' were undoubtedly composed by him.

Various quaint legends have in the course of centuries gathered about the memory of the holy Bishop of Milan. On one occasion he is said to have gone to the Prefect Macedonius, to ask mercy for a condemned criminal, but he was refused admittance, and, turning away from the door, he prophesied that the day would come when Macedonius would fly to the Church for safety, and be unable to enter. Not long afterwards the Prefect, being pursued by his enemies, came to a church

door, but, though it was open, he could not enter, and fell a victim to those who sought his life.

On another occasion, a nobleman in whose house St. Ambrose was a guest boasted that he had never known adversity ; all his children were prosperous, he had many slaves to wait upon him, troubles might fall on others, they never came near him, and so on. St. Ambrose listened for some little time ; then he got up hastily, and said to his host : ‘ Arise, fly quickly from this house, for the Lord is at hand to destroy it ! ’ The nobleman laughed at him, but scarcely had the Saint left the house before it was swallowed up by an earthquake, and everyone in it destroyed.

Again, when an obstinate heretic went to hear St. Ambrose preach, intending to interrupt him, an angel appeared in the pulpit, whispering in the Bishop’s ear. In fact, on every occasion when help was needed it came to St. Ambrose. When he fell asleep in church one day, and was in imagination assisting at the funeral of St. Martin of Tours, to whom he had been much attached, the sacristan of the vision struck him on the shoulder to wake him. When he was dying, Christ Himself appeared beside his bed, and when St. Honoratus, Bishop of Vercelli, whose ordination had been one of St. Ambrose’s last acts, fell asleep whilst watching beside him, an angel came down to arouse him just in time for him to perform the last offices for the expiring prelate.

St. Ambrose is also supposed to have returned from heaven several times to aid his beloved people of Milan. In 1037 he is said to have menaced Conrad II. with a sword when that monarch was unwilling to grant certain privileges to his Italian subjects ; and at the Battle of Parabiago, in 1339, when the Milanese seemed likely to be defeated, he suddenly appeared, mounted on a white horse, and with an acolyte behind him. Wearing no armour but his episcopal robes, and armed only with a three-thonged scourge, he laid vigorously about him, thrashing the living and the dead with strict impartiality, as represented in a quaint fifteenth-century picture preserved in the Paris National Collection, beneath which is written ‘ *Sainte Evêque armé d’étrières* ’ (The Holy Bishop armed with thongs).

St. Ambrose is of course the patron Saint of Milan, and the church founded by him in that city, though much modernized, still retains the general form given to it by him. The doors

are said to be the very ones closed in such a dramatic manner against the Emperor Theodosius, which were transferred to it from the old cathedral. Strange to say, no other city has chosen the much-loved Saint as protector, but he is supposed to look after the interests of all domestic animals, especially of geese, probably because a goose is a type of winter in Italy, and the Bishop's fête-day is on December 7. Bees, too, are under his protection, on account of the incident mentioned above, and the word 'ambrosia,' signifying honey, is supposed to be derived from his name.

To make up for the scarcity of his votaries, St. Ambrose has nearly as many symbols as the Apostles themselves. His most constant attribute is the three-thonged scourge already alluded to, the meaning of which has been very variously explained. Some see in it an emblem of the struggle between the civil and ecclesiastical power in which St. Ambrose was so triumphantly victorious; others look upon it as a memorial of the Archbishop's severity to the Arians, against whom the people of Milan declare he fought in person; and yet others say it is a mere allusion to the refusal to allow the Emperor Theodosius to receive the Holy Communion. The three thongs are generally taken to symbolize the Trinity, and although some, notably Puricelli in his '*Dissertatio Nazariana*', declare that a four-thonged scourge used to be carried in cathedral processions in Milan in memory of the great Archbishop, the three thongs are so persistent that there probably was some very strong original reason for their adoption. In the old Milanese coinage St. Ambrose constantly appears, wearing his episcopal robes and mitre, and, whether on foot or horseback, with his characteristic scourge in his hand. He holds this scourge in a quaint bas-relief reproduced by Père Cahier in his '*Caractéristiques des Saints*', in an old oil-painting preserved in the sacristy of the cathedral at Aix-la-Chapelle, in the print of his Apparition at Parabiago, already referred to, and in the picture by Sacchi of the Four Latin Doctors, it lies doubled up upon the table beside him.

The pen given to all writers of note is, of course, one of St. Ambrose's attributes. Occasionally it is held instead of the scourge, which is also sometimes replaced by two human bones, as in a painting by one of the Vivarini in the Venice Academy. Now and then the Bishop holds a chalice, or

various church vessels are strewn at his feet, in allusion to his having, it is said, sold some of those belonging to his cathedral to redeem Milanese citizens who had been taken prisoners by the Goths. The bees, emblematical of the eloquence of St. Ambrose and reminiscent of the incident related above, are often seen hovering about his head or issuing from a hive on the ground beside him. Now and then, as in a quaint engraving in the 'Chronicle of Nuremberg,' a young bull appears with the Bishop, in allusion to the resemblance of his character to that of St. Luke; more rarely a goose is his companion. The dove, which in Sacchi's picture and elsewhere is introduced whispering into the ear of St. Ambrose, and is in certain instances replaced by an angel, is not in his case symbolic merely of inspiration, but also of the direct interference on his behalf from on high when the child cried 'Ambrose Bishop!' at his consecration.

In ecclesiastical decoration, as in a very dramatic group above the southern portal of Chartres Cathedral, St. Ambrose is sometimes introduced with the Emperor Theodosius as a suppliant at his feet, and in devotional pictures he is often grouped with Saints Gervasius and Protasius, because of his discovery of their remains, and his joint patronage with them of Milan. Saints Nabor and Felix are also specially associated with him, because it was in their church that the relics of their fellow-martyrs were found.

Now and then Saints Ambrose and Augustine are represented as conferring together, because they were long erroneously supposed to have composed the *Te Deum* and modern artists are fond of associating the Archbishop with the much later St. Carlo Borromeo, who was also Archbishop of Milan.

One of the finest representations of St. Ambrose as the patron Saint of Milan is the 'St. Ambrose Enthroned,' in the Frari Church, Venice, begun by Alvise Vivarini just before his death in 1502, and completed, it is supposed, by Basaiti. The Archbishop is seated beneath the beautiful vaulting of a Romanesque apse, with Saints George and Vitalis standing beside him, and grouped on the steps of the throne are various Saints, including St. Gregory, whilst on a lower level Saints Jerome and Sebastian stand opposite to each other, with two angels between them playing on mandolines. Very beautiful, too, is the figure

of St. Ambrose in the 'Madonna Enthroned' of Giovanni and Antonio Vivarini, now in the Venice Academy, and in the same subject by Botticelli in the Florence Academy, in which the Archbishop is placed between St. John the Evangelist and the Archangel Michael. The character of the great teacher was finely interpreted by Correggio in the Parma frescoes, by Titian in the 'Madonna of the Louvre,' by Tintoretto in the 'Paradiso' of the Doge's Palace, Venice, and Fra Angelico introduced him in the 'Great Crucifixion' of S. Marco, in which he is grouped with St. Augustine near the kneeling Saints Jerome and Dominic.

In the ninth-century Mosaics of S. Ambrogio, Milan, scenes from the life of St. Ambrose are introduced. Above the altar is a quaintly archaic gilt relief of our Lord, between Saints Ambrose and Peter, and in the same church is preserved in a steel case, only opened on payment of a large fee, a unique relic of mediæval art, the so-called Palliotto, the golden covering of the altar executed about 835, by a certain craftsman named Wolfinus, by order of Archbishop Angilbertus, in memory of his great predecessor. On the front of this unique survival of ninth-century art are a series of scenes in gold relief from the life of Christ, and on the back are represented in a similar manner the chief incidents of the career of St. Ambrose, including the Settling of the bees on his lips when he was an infant, his Appointment as Prefect, his Election as Bishop, his Vision of the funeral of St. Martin, his Preaching in the cathedral with an angel inspiring him, his Healing of the sick, his Vision of Christ on his death-bed, the Waking of the Bishop of Vercelli by an angel, the Death of St. Ambrose, and the Ascent of his soul to heaven. On two of the panels St. Ambrose is seen blessing the donor and the master-smith Wolfinus, and the centre is occupied by fine figures of the Redeemer and St. Michael.

Another interesting series of scenes from the life of St. Ambrose are the frescoes by Masolino in S. Clemente, Rome, in which he is seen lying in his cradle, whilst his nurse is trying to disperse the swarm of bees hovering about his face; pausing in his lecture to the people of Milan at the cry of the child from amongst the audience; looking on at the wreck of the boastful nobleman's house; and dying in a room containing his writing-table and books.

The incident of the Finding of the relics of Saints Gervasius and Protasius is not very often represented, but there is a quaint example preserved in the National Museum of Paris, in which St. Ambrose in his episcopal robes is lifting up the pavement with a pickaxe, revealing to view two bodies lying as if asleep, with hands folded on their breasts, whilst behind the Archbishop are grouped a number of monks, and Saints Peter and Paul direct the operations from above.

In spite of its dramatic possibilities, the meeting between the Emperor and St. Ambrose at the church doors has not often been represented. Cavalcaselle and Crowe, it is true, refer to a painting of it by Fra Angelico, but if it ever existed it is now lost, and Rubens treated the subject very forcibly in a large composition, now in the Imperial Gallery, Vienna, of which there is a reduced copy in the National Gallery, London. A group of sculpture by Falconnet, in the Invalides, Paris, represents, in a somewhat feeble manner, St. Ambrose repulsing Theodosius, and Subleyras, in a painting now in the Louvre, has rendered the final scene in the contest between the two, when the Emperor kneels to receive the Benediction so long denied to him.

CHAPTER XVIII

ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO AND HIS MOTHER

IN the history of the early Church, there are few more touching stories than that of St. Augustine, who was won from the evil ways of his youth by the ceaseless prayers of his mother, and is as celebrated as a penitent as St. Mary Magdalene. Born at Tagaste, in Numidia, in 354, the son of a poor but ambitious heathen magistrate named Patricius, and Monica, his wife, a Christian woman famed for her piety, the young Augustine was from his earliest years subjected to conflicting influences. His father wished him to achieve worldly success ; his mother's one desire was that he should become a Christian, and give up his life to God. Endowed with perfect health and excellent abilities, the boy quickly made his choice, resolving to study hard and become famous as soon as he could. He was sent

first to Madaura, and then to Carthage, to work under the best masters, and he soon won golden opinions from all about him, on account of the rapidity with which he assimilated knowledge. Unfortunately, when he reached Carthage at the age of seventeen, full of eager life and ambition, he fell under the influence of evil companions, and was by them drawn into all manner of dissipation. He has himself in his 'Confessions,' told the melancholy story of his fall, exaggerating in his bitter remorse his own wrong-doing, and blaming himself bitterly, not only for his actual sins, but for what were really the natural mistakes of a noble nature. The first thing to awake his slumbering conscience is said to have been reading the Hortensius of Cicero, in which the great Roman orator dwells on the beauty and refining influence of the study of philosophy. By a not unnatural transition, the young student passed from Cicero to a consideration of the principles of the much-persecuted sect of the Manichæans, who advocated the utter subjection of the passions, and, as a result, abstinence from all sensual pleasure.

Ere long, Augustine, who was really already full of regret, if not exactly remorse, for his Carthage mistakes, became a professed Manichæan; but though his intellect was to some extent satisfied by the keen speculations of the sect, his heart still craved for something more satisfying. He returned to his native town, where he was eagerly welcomed by his mother, to whose entreaties that he would become a Christian he still turned a deaf ear. He lectured on literature at Tagaste for some little time, winning a good deal of applause for his eloquence, and no doubt the daily intercourse with St. Monica had something to do with the change which now appeared in his views of life. When he was about twenty-five years old, he went back to Carthage and there had many interviews with the celebrated Manichæan teacher Faustus, whom he eagerly cross-examined in the hope of finding the peace he longed for. The result was complete disillusion. Not in this or any other sect, he felt, was the absolution for past error to be obtained, which alone could give him what he needed. He determined to go to Rome, and his mother, who had watched his career thus far with trembling fear, rejoiced, for she hoped that in the Imperial city, where so many earnest Christians then resided, her beloved son would find the necessary guidance.



Alinari photo]

[*Bologna Gallery*

THE "FELICINI" ALTAR-PIECE, 1494, WITH SAINTS AUGUSTINE AND
MONICA

By Francia

To face p. 166

Saint Monica is said to have gone to the Bishop of Carthage and to have told him the whole story of her anxieties, weeping so bitterly the while that the good prelate said to her, 'Go in peace ; the son of so many tears cannot perish.' Not in Rome, however, was the salvation to be effected. Augustine, it is true, gained much fame and wealth as a pleader at the bar, but he sought in vain for the riches passing understanding which were the real object of his quest. Neither Pope Damasus, whose end was then close at hand, friend though he was of St. Jerome, nor any of his clergy, were able to meet the need of the eager inquirer after truth, and, disgusted with what seemed to him the emptiness of all religions, Augustine went to Milan. Here, most fortunately, he soon attracted the notice of St. Ambrose, who had just been elected Archbishop, and meeting at first on the common ground of acquaintance with the Latin authors, especially of Plato, the two became great friends. St. Ambrose, with the tact for which he was remarkable, made at first no attempt to convert his guest, but, as Augustine often went to hear him preach, he had many an opportunity of speaking words in season, as it were unconsciously. Slowly but surely the victory was won. The Son of God, and Him crucified, whose glorious life and death were so eloquently dwelt upon by St. Ambrose, gradually became to the earnest seeker after truth more than a mere noble historical character. He grew to be a living personal Saviour, the only one who could rescue the penitent from the condemnation of his own conscience, and give to him a new vitality, a new power of facing the problems of life. In his 'Confessions' St. Augustine tells with pathetic eloquence how the writings of Plato enkindled in him an incredible ardour ; and how he passed from them to the Scriptures, there to find a revelation of the highest wisdom, the very Word of God made flesh.

The joy of St. Monica on the fulfilment of her long-cherished desire may be imagined. She hastened to join the son of so many prayers at Milan, and was present when, on April 25, 387, he was baptized with his son Adeodatus, who was but eighteen years younger than himself, by St. Ambrose in the Cathedral of Milan. For a few months St. Augustine lived quietly with his mother, but she died early in 388, and he then, as was customary with converts, divided all his property with the poor, to be henceforth the servant of God only. In 391 he was

ordained priest, and in 395 appointed the colleague of Valerius, Bishop of Hippo, on the northern coast of Africa, not far from Carthage. In 396 Valerius died, leaving St. Augustine sole Bishop, and from that time till his own death, in 430, the new prelate devoted his life to the onerous duties of his high position, winning thousands to the faith by his eloquent preaching, and producing many beautiful books which are looked upon as priceless heirlooms by the Church. His celebrated 'Confessions' were given to the world in 397, and took rank at once as one of the greatest autobiographies ever written, rivalling in pathos even the Penitential Psalms of David. In 426 appeared the 'Civitate Dei,' or City of God, composed, says Gibbon, 'with a view to justifying the ways of Providence in the destruction of the Roman power; and two years later was published the 'Retractiones,' in which St. Augustine frankly reviewed his past life, admitting that he had often seen cause to change his opinions. In the Donatist and Pelagian controversies, which waged so bitterly during the early portion of the fifth century, the Bishop of Hippo took a very vigorous part; his own terrible experiences when he was worn with remorse and tossed with doubt, had given him a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, such as few of his contemporaries were privileged to share.

The last year of St. Augustine's life was darkened by the calamity which overtook the northern provinces of Africa, when the Vandals, led by the pitiless Genseric, invaded the country, and, after spreading ruin and devastation far and wide, besieged Hippo, in which Count Boniface had taken refuge, broken-hearted at the troubles his own hasty action had brought upon the district under his charge. St. Augustine, who knew only too well what it was to suffer for his own mistakes, did much to aid the Count by his counsels, but he was now an old man, and on August 28, 430, he peacefully expired. The fact that the Vandals raised the siege of the town soon afterwards was attributed to the efficacy of his prayers. He was buried in the Church of Peace, also known as St. Stephen's, in Hippo, but when the Bishops of Africa were exiled to Sardinia in 500, they took the remains of St. Augustine with them, and in 721 Luitprand, King of the Lombards, had them translated to Pavia, where they were re-interred in the basilica occupying the site of the present cathedral. The fine sarcophagus

in which the ashes of the great Bishop are now enshrined is generally supposed to date from the fourteenth century, and to be the work of Bonino da Campiglione, although it has also been ascribed to the brothers Agostino and Agnolo of Siena. The recumbent figure on the bier, with angels folding the shroud about it, is full of a feeling of repose, and the bas-reliefs below, representing scenes from the life of the Saint, are very beautiful.

Several touching legends are told of supernatural apparitions granted to St. Augustine. On one occasion, when he was washing the feet of a pilgrim, he suddenly discovered that the man he had thought a mere earthly wanderer was Christ Himself; and another day, when he was meditating on the seashore, his attention was attracted to a beautiful boy of two or three years old, who was pouring water from the sea into a hole in the sand. The Bishop looked on for some little time in silence, and then said to the child, 'Why do you waste your time like that? You can never empty the ocean.' To which the little fellow replied with a smile of radiant wisdom, 'What I am trying to do is no more impossible than for thee to fathom the mystery of the Divine nature, on which thou art even now pondering.' This answer revealed to the Saint that the boy was Christ Himself, who had come from heaven to urge him to waste no further time in trying to understand the inexplicable mystery of the Trinity.

In his own 'Confessions' St. Augustine tells of a still more extraordinary incident, which he was able later to explain as another instance of the intervention of Christ on his behalf. The Bishop had been discussing the Holy Scriptures with a friend, and his heart being torn with conflicting feelings, he rushed out to seek to calm his mind in solitude. Throwing himself on the ground beneath a fig-tree, he wept bitter tears, and presently he heard a child-like voice saying three times, 'Tolle lege,' or 'Take and read.' He looked up, and, seeing no one, he went back to the room he had left, and took up the Bible again. It opened at the thirteenth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, and he read, 'Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.' The miraculous incident made a deep impression on St.

Augustine, and is said to have had much to do with his later conversion.

St. Augustine is one of the patron Saints of Pavia, on account of his interment in that city, and of Sardinia, because his remains rested there for so long. He is supposed to look after the interests of theologians, because he was in his lifetime so able a controversialist, and the Augustinians claim him as their first founder, although some say that honour belongs with better right to his great namesake of Canterbury.

Of the many attributes given to the celebrated Bishop of Hippo, of whom it was said 'his love became ecstasy, and, carried away by it, he forgot his learning,' the most distinctive is the flaming heart, in allusion to the fervent love of Christ revealed in his writings, especially in his 'Confessions,' where he said, 'My heart was full of desire for Thee.' Occasionally the significance of the emblem is further intensified by the heart being transfixed by two arrows, forming a kind of St. Andrew's cross, probably in allusion to the poignant remorse endured by St. Augustine. Sometimes, as in the 'Coronation of the Virgin' by Francia in S. Frediano at Lucca, St. Augustine holds a scroll bearing a typical quotation from his writings, such as, '*In celo qualis est Pater, talis est Filius; in terra qualis est Mater, talis est Filius.*'* The chalice is given to him for the same reason as to St. Ambrose, because he sold the sacred vessels for the good of his distressed flock ; the dove, the token of inspiration, is now and then introduced whispering in his ear ; the pen and book, as symbols of his position as a teacher and writer, are constant attributes. As having done so much to promote the cause of Christianity, St. Augustine often holds a church ; and in some old engravings, Christ Himself is with him, pointing to the building and saying, 'I recommend My Church to thee.'

The costume worn by St. Augustine is often a very quaint combination of ecclesiastical and monastic details, as in a fifteenth-century Italian painting in the National Museum, Paris, in which he wears the Bishop's mitre and the robes with the rope girdle of the Augustinian friars, whilst at his feet lies a figure supposed to represent Aristotle, and to signify the Bishop's triumph over the learning of the heathen.

* 'Such as the Father is in heaven, such is the Son ; such as the Mother on earth, such is the Son.'

On account of the fact that the relics of St. Stephen were discovered when St. Augustine was Bishop of Hippo, and certain portions of them were secured by him for his church, the first martyr is often associated in works of art with the great doctor. The two are even supposed to have intervened together from heaven on several occasions, notably when they came down to bury a certain Count Orgaz, as represented in a fine painting by El Greco, now in the Prado Gallery, Madrid. St. Augustine is constantly placed beside St. Ambrose in devotional pictures, for the reason already given, and he is, of course, frequently grouped with St. Monica, as in the well-known painting by Ary Scheffer.

The special attributes of St. Monica are: a tablet on which is inscribed the name of Jesus, in memory of her earnest prayers on behalf of her son, and a scarf or sash, either introduced beside her or held in her hand, in allusion to the custom amongst the Augustinian monks of distributing blessed scarves to the faithful on the fête-day of the Saint, whom they greatly venerate on account of the tears she shed before the conversion of St. Augustine. The memory of these tears is preserved in a beautiful vesper hymn published in the Mone collection, of which the following is the first verse :

‘O mater flendo gradiens,
Fletuque spargens semina (Ps. cxxvi. 5),
Sed exultanter radiens,
Mundo ferens charismata.’*

In a poem attributed to Adam de St. Victor, and included in the Gautier edition of his works, the same idea is somewhat differently expressed ; the lines running thus :

‘Felix imber lacrymarum !
Quo effusit tam præclarum
Lumen in Ecclesia !
Multo fletu seminavit
Germen ubi reportavit
Metens in lætitia.
Plus accepit quam petivit ;

* ‘ O mother weeping as thou goest,
And sowing thy seed in tears,
To return exultingly,
Bringing gifts for all the world.’

O quam miro tune gestivit
 Spiritus tripudio !
 Cernens natum fide natum
 Sedet Christo jam sacramum,
 Toto mentis studio.*

In the Church of the Ognisanti, Florence, there is a very fine interpretation of the character of St. Augustine, by Sandro Botticelli, who has represented the great doctor seated at a table absorbed in profound meditation, and wearing a white surplice, with a red cloak lined with yellow. Another admirable rendering of the same subject is the 'St. Augustine in his study' on the predella of an Altar-piece, now in the Florence Academy, by Fra Filippo Lippi, who has added the quaint detail of the 'three arrows of the three-stringed bow,' an emblem of the Trinity, piercing the heart of the Saint as he looks up from his writing at a monk, standing in the doorway, and gazing at the remarkable phenomenon in reverent astonishment.

Paris Bordone in the oil-painting in S. Andrea, Venice, Bartolommeo Vivarini in a drawing in S. Giovanni e Paolo in the same city, and Vittore Carpaccio in the picture now in the Brera Gallery, Milan, have also shown a fine appreciation of the character of the great doctor. Luca della Robbia, in the famous 'Tabernacle of the Holy Cross' in S. Maria dell' Impruneta near Florence, introduced the figure of St. Augustine as a pendant to that of St. John the Baptist, and in the beautiful bas-relief of the 'Coronation of the Virgin' in the Ognisanti, Florence, from the same great hand, St. Augustine is placed between Saints Gregory and Lucy. In Andrea del Sarto's 'Disputa,' in the Pitti Gallery, Florence, Saints

* 'O happy rain of tears !
 From which a light so glorious
 Did shine forth in the Church !
 With much weeping did she sow,
 But with what gladness did she return,
 Bringing her sheaves with her !
 More than she sought did she receive !
 And with what exceeding joy
 Did her spirit leap within her !
 Enthroned on high, she sees her converted son,
 With his whole heart,
 Devoted to the Lord.'

Alinari photo]

ST. AUGUSTINE IN HIS STUDY
By Fra Filippo Lippi

[*Accademia, Florence*]



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Augustine, Francis, Lawrence, and St. Peter Martyr, are discussing the doctrine of the Trinity, in the presence of Saints Sebastian and Mary Magdalene, who kneel at their feet; in Fra Angelico's 'Great Crucifixion' in San Marco, St. Augustine stands beside St. Ambrose, on the right of the Redeemer's cross. On the predella of Francia's 'Gozzadini Altar-piece,' now in the Bologna Gallery, St. Augustine, wearing a jewelled cope and a friar's robe, his mitre and staff at his feet, is introduced between Christ on the cross and a group of the Virgin and Child with St. John. In the 'Felicini Altar-piece' from the same hand and in the same collection, the Bishop, a noble figure in full canonicals, appears beside the Virgin's throne, with St. Monica in the dress of a nun behind him, leaning her head lovingly upon his shoulder; in the grand fresco by Correggio, of the 'Vision of St. John at Patmos,' in the Church of S. Giovanni Evangelista at Parma, the youthful Evangelist and St. Augustine are seated together between two of the arches, the latter listening with reverent attention to the exposition of the former on some passage of the Scriptures; and in Tintoretto's 'Paradiso,' in the Doge's Palace, Venice, the face of St. Monica, who is near the group of the four Latin Fathers, is very beautiful.

Amongst devotional pictures in which St. Augustine, though not the only, is the principal figure, may be specially noted the exquisite group by Pinturicchio, in the Pryker collection, Berlin, formerly part of a Reliquary, in which St. Augustine stands on the clouds, two angels upholding a mandorla, or triangular glory, behind him, whilst below Saints Benedict and Bernard kneel in prayer. The figure of the famous penitent is also very fine in the central picture of the Polyptych by the same master in the Perugia Gallery, and a scene from his life is introduced in the predella below. In the Altar-piece in S. Giovanni Crisostomo, Venice, considered one of Giovanni Bellini's finest works, St. Augustine, whose face, though very beautiful, is that of quite a young man, stands opposite to St. Sebastian, at the foot of a mass of rock on which St. Jerome is seated reading; and in Signorelli's 'Virgin and Child with the archangels Michael and Gabriel,' now in the Florence Academy, the Bishop of Hippo is seated beside St. Athanasius with the emblem of the Trinity, to the mystery of which they both gave so much attention, above them.

Many quaint and charming works of art have been inspired by the picturesque incidents of St. Augustine's chequered career. In the Christian Museum of the Vatican is preserved a fourteenth-century representation of his first arrival at school, led in by his mother, a halo bearing the name of its owner round each head. The master receives them courteously, and the other scholars, pretending to be absorbed in their horn-books, are peeping at the new arrival. The beautiful series of frescoes by Benozzo Gozzoli, in the Church of St. Geminiano at Verona, include seventeen subjects from the life-story of the great doctor. The artist's delight in children had free scope in the earlier scenes, in which he has shown St. Augustine amongst his schoolmates, looking on with them at the punishment of a boy of about his own age. Equally happy is the rendering of St. Augustine as an older man, teaching young Romans rhetoric in a fine Renaissance hall; the Departure of the Saint from Rome, escorted by troops of richly-dressed companions of both sexes on horses led by pages; the Preaching of the newly-converted priest at Milan, in the presence of a large audience in contemporary costumes; and the Death of St. Monica at Ostia, with her son and many friends beside her.

In the Stanza della Segnatura of the Vatican, beneath the fresco of the Disputa, Pierino del Vaga added, between a representation of a heathen sacrifice and the Cumæan Sibyl, the incident of St. Augustine, who is on horseback, remonstrating with the Child who is trying to empty the sea, and the same subject has been treated with slight variations by Murillo, Vandyck, Rubens, Garofalo, Dürer, and many others. In the painting by Garofalo in the National Gallery, London, St. Catherine is introduced behind the Saint, and the Virgin and Child, with an escort of angels, appear in the clouds above; and in Vandyck's picture St. Monica kneels near by, as if recognising the divinity of the Child with the shell.

In a church at Cremona is a painting by Carlotto Caliari, representing the Baptism of St. Augustine in the presence of his mother, and the same subject is constantly introduced in chapels dedicated to him or to St. Monica. In convents belonging to any branch of the Augustinian Order, the Bishop of Hippo is often represented wearing the customary black habit, and giving the rules to a group of monks, or he is dis-

Pophi photo

PART OF THE "GOZZADINI" PREDELLA, WITH ST. AUGUSTINE

By Francia

[*Bologna Gallery*]



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tributing alms, wearing a friar's robes and a Bishop's mitre. In the Bologna Gallery there is a dramatic rendering, by Michele Desubleo, of the incident of Christ appearing amongst other pilgrims to have His feet washed by St. Augustine, and in the Louvre is a painting from the same hand of an Apparition of the Virgin to the Bishop of Hippo. In the Prado Gallery, Madrid, is a very fine rendering of the same subject by Murillo, and in St. Augustine's Church at Antwerp is a beautiful painting by Vandyck of St. Augustine being carried up by angels to Christ, who awaits him at an opening in the clouds, whilst St. Monica kneels below in adoration.

In the Church of S. Agostino at Rome is a fine Altar-piece by Guercino, in which the great Bishop is placed between Saints John the Baptist and St. Paul, and in the chapel containing the tomb of his mother, in the same church, there are traces of some very interesting frescoes of Scenes from the life of St. Monica, including her Visit to the Bishop of Carthage; the Apparition of an angel, who is saying to her, 'Ulbi tu et ille,' ('Where thou art he will be'), and pointing to two shadowy forms in the distance; the Interview between the mother and son when the good news of the conversion of the latter is told; and the Death of St. Monica, holding the hand of St. Augustine, who bends over her in deep sorrow.

CHAPTER XIX

ROMAN POPES AND GREEK BISHOPS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

ALTHOUGH it has long been the custom amongst artists to group the four Latin Fathers together, St. Gregory the Great was not born until nearly two centuries after the death of St. Augustine. In order to maintain the chronological sequence hitherto followed,^{it is therefore necessary, before considering the celebrated Pope, to treat of the less famous Saints who were contemporary with the earlier Fathers, as well as those who lived in the first half of the sixth century.}

To Pope Marcellus I., who succeeded Marcellinus as Bishop of Rome in 308, after the see had been vacant for more than

three years, belongs the distinction, if distinction it be, of having roused against him the anger of Maxentius, who before his defeat by Constantine had treated the Christians with marked consideration. The Pope, whose zeal appears to have been greater than his discretion, inflicted so severe a penance on certain of his flock who had shown weakness during the persecutions, that they turned against him. Their cause was espoused by many in Rome, and a conflict ensued between the rival partisans, which brought disgrace upon the Church. Maxentius, seeing that peace could only be restored by drastic measures, banished Marcellus, who was never again allowed to return to his see. These, the simple facts of the case, have been supplemented by a quaint legend to the effect that, not content with sending the Pope into exile, the tyrant compelled him to herd cattle in a stable belonging to a house which, after his death, was converted by its owner, a pious lady named Lucina, into the church still called after him, and in which his body now rests. For this reason, or, as some think, merely to typify the lowly position of the chief Bishop of Christendom before the conversion of Constantine, St. Marcellus is generally associated in art with an ox or an ass, or he is represented tending cattle near a stable. He is also sometimes represented saying Mass, or merely holding the chalice in his hand. Although there is no doubt that he died a natural death, he is alluded to as a martyr by St. Jerome, Bede, and others.

When Constantine defeated Maxentius in 312, the See of Rome was occupied by Pope Melchiades, who, on account chiefly of his suffering during the persecutions which preceded the triumph of Christianity, has been admitted to the hierarchy of the Saints. He made, however, little mark on the history of his time, and has no special attributes in art, though he may occasionally appear amongst the Saints introduced in early devotional pictures.

Far more celebrated than any of the other Popes who preceded the great St. Gregory was St. Damasus, who at the age of sixty was chosen, in 366, to succeed Pope Liberius. A man of indomitable will, but with a rare gift of winning others to his own way of thinking, he did more than any of his predecessors to stamp out the Arian heresy. Unfortunately, the first year of his pontificate was stained with blood, for a terrible fight took place in the streets of Rome between his adherents

and those of a rival candidate named Ursinus ; but with this unseemly conflict the new Pope had really little to do. A man of high culture, he was one of the first Churchmen to show any real love of sacred art for its own sake, and to him was due the restoration and preservation of the Roman Catacombs, as well as the foundation of several basilicas, including that named after him and the Saint to whom it was dedicated, S. Lorenzo in Damaso, now replaced by a modern building designed by Bramante. St. Damasus died in 384, and was buried in an oratory erected by himself near the Catacomb of St. Calixtus. Just before the end he is reported to have said : 'I ardently long for the honour of being laid in the Catacombs, but I fear to profane the sacred spot where such priceless relics are enshrined.' For some unexplained reason St. Damasus is supposed to be able to cure fevers, and is greatly venerated in Italy as a most earnest champion of the truth.

St. Damasus has been called the Diamond of the Faith, and this may possibly be why a ring set with a large precious stone is his chief emblem in art. Some, however, see in this name a mere play upon words, Adamus being another form of Damasus, but in either case the diamond is an excellent symbol of one whose attitude was so uncompromising as that of the great opponent of Arianism.

An equally appropriate attribute of St. Damasus is a scroll, on which the Latin Doxology is inscribed, for he is universally credited with having introduced its use at the end of each psalm sung in the services at church. A church is also sometimes placed in his hand, or he is represented standing near the porch of a basilica, to which he is pointing as if taking possession of it, in manifest allusion to his work as a restorer of the Catacombs and builder of several new churches in Rome. In certain rare old engravings the monstrance is given to St. Damasus, a peculiarity explained by a very quaint legend, to the effect that one day, when he was celebrating Mass, the beauty of a woman amongst the worshippers so distracted his attention that he could hardly proceed with the service. Full of penitence for his sin, he felt that he was no longer worthy to elevate the Host, and resolved, when he left the church, to cut off his right hand, so that he should not be tempted to use it again for the sacred ceremony. He duly carried out his horrible purpose, but he had scarcely

done so when the Blessed Virgin appeared to him, reproved him for his hasty action, and restored the hand to its place. Another explanation of the use of the emblem is that St. Damascus gave many costly monstrances to churches in Rome, but so did many other Popes. The probability would appear to be that those who give the emblem to St. Damasus have confused him with the later St. John Damascene, whose legend will be related in due course.

The legend of St. Sylvester, who occupied the See of Rome at the time of the conversion of Constantine, has already been related in connection with that Emperor, and the frescoes, etc., in which the two are represented together have been noticed. It must be added here, however, that the Pope sometimes appears alone, when it is usual to represent him in his pontifical robes with a dragon at his feet, the latter in memory, say some, of his subjugation of the terrible beast, which before the interference of the Pope, had devoured so many Christians of Rome, whilst others see in it merely a symbol of the victory over idolatry achieved by the holy Pontiff. A bull sometimes replaces the dragon, in allusion to the incident of the resuscitation of the animal killed by the magician; and occasionally the Pope holds portraits of Saints Peter and Paul in one hand, in supposed reference to the interference of those Apostles to prevent the slaughter of the children in whose blood Constantine had been advised to bathe.

Saints Sylvester and Damasus are amongst the eight ideal Figures in fresco ranged round the Sala di Constantino of the Vatican, each with two beautiful women beside him, symbolizing the virtues for which he was specially remarkable, and in the grand compositions to which these figures are supplementary, St. Sylvester appears several times as a chief actor. Of these, the chief are the 'Baptism of Constantine,' already referred to, and the 'Presentation of Rome to the Pope by the Emperor,' painted by Rafaello del Colle, who has laid the scene in Rome, and represented St. Sylvester seated on a throne, with Constantine kneeling at his feet offering him an allegorical figure of the city of Rome. In a quaint picture reproduced by Ciampini, of the great Council of Nicæa, at which Arius was condemned in 325, St. Sylvester shares the throne of Constantine, whilst his mother and the minor Bishops are ranged in a circle below; and in some old Byzantine frescoes in the Chapel of S. Silvestro

in SS. Quattro Coronati at Rome the Healing of Constantine, his Baptism, and his Coronation by the Pope, are graphically though stiffly rendered.

Most celebrated of the fourth-century Greek Bishops who have been canonized, though they did not achieve the dignity of martyrdom, are Saints Epiphanius of Salamis, James of Nisibis, and Nicolas of Myra. St. Epiphanius of Salamis, in the island of Cyprus, consecrated Bishop about 367, was the close friend of the famous Abbot Hilarion. He has been called the Oracle of Palestine, on account of his eloquence, but he was chiefly celebrated for the eager generosity with which he aided all who came to him in trouble of any sort. It is related that on one occasion two men who determined to play upon what they considered his weakness were terribly punished. One of them pretended to fall down dead, and the other went to the Bishop to beg for money to bury his comrade. St. Epiphanius gave him the necessary sum without hesitation, and the beggar hurried triumphantly back to his friend, expecting to have a good laugh with him over their successful duplicity. When he got back, however, he found that his companion had really died in the interval, and though he hurried to the Bishop to entreat his help and forgiveness, St. Epiphanius merely replied that he saw no cause for interference. On account of this gruesome anecdote the Bishop of Salamis is sometimes represented with a dead body lying near him on the ground. Another peculiarity by which he may be recognised is that his feet are generally bare, because it is said that, having once lost one of his sandals as he was leaving his church, he did not trouble to get another, but henceforth left off both.

St. James of Nisibis in Mesopotamia is generally associated with a swarm of bees, because it is said that, when he invoked the aid of heaven during the siege of Nisibis by the Persians, the air above the heads of the enemy immediately became black with bees, shutting out the light of day. Thousands were stung to death, and on the ramparts of the city the figure of the holy Bishop stood out in a blaze of glory, so that all who saw him realized that he was indeed the favourite of Heaven. Nisibis was saved for the time, but it was surrendered to the Romans ten years later, on the death of the Emperor Julian, and at the present day only a few scattered ruins remain to bear witness to its old glory as the seat of an important bishopric.

Far more widely known than St. Epiphanius of Salamis or St. James of Nisibis is St. Nicolas of Myra, who, though he belonged, strictly speaking, to the Eastern, has been lovingly adopted by the Western Church, and is perhaps more constantly introduced in works of art than any of his contemporaries. As is the case with many popular Saints, truth and fiction are so closely interwoven in the various stories related of him, that it is impossible to separate them, and his votaries continually supplement the wonders connected with his memory with fresh instances of his intervention from beyond the grave.

Born at Panthera in Asia Minor in the fourth century, but at what date is not stated, St. Nicolas was the son of wealthy parents who had long desired an heir in vain. When in answer to many prayers, and as a reward for much almsgiving, the little one at last arrived, he is said to have astonished his nurses and parents on the very first day of his birth, by standing up in his bath and raising his clasped hands in grateful adoration to God, who had suffered him to be born. It is related further that he used to refuse to take food more than once on Wednesdays and Fridays, and as soon as he could speak he uttered words of such wisdom that all who heard them marvelled, praising the Lord whose spirit was revealed in them. As a matter of course, the happy parents felt that one so gifted must be dedicated to God, and they decided that he should become a priest. Unfortunately, they both died of the plague soon after the consecration of their beloved son, and were thus cut off from witnessing his remarkable career. Left heir to all his father's possessions, the young priest resolved to employ them for the service of God, and many quaint stories are told of the way in which he came to the rescue of those who were in need. From his retreat in the Monastery of Sion, not far from Myra, of which he is said to have become Abbot, though there is no evidence to prove it, he would issue forth in the darkness to render aid to those in distress. On one occasion he called on three successive nights at the house of a certain nobleman who had sunk into poverty, and had no money with which to endow his three unmarried daughters. The maidens used to weep because they could never marry, and often went supperless to bed. The first time St. Nicolas called he threw a bag of gold in at the window of their room, which fell

upon the feet of the eldest girl ; the second night a similar gift came to her next sister, and on the third to the youngest. Twice the generous donor slipped away before anyone discovered who he was, but on the third night the father, who was on the watch, caught him by the skirt of his robe, recognised him, and, falling on his knees before him, clung to him, crying : ‘Oh, Nicolas, why seek to hide thyself?’

On another occasion, when St. Nicolas was on his way to the Holy Land, a terrible storm overtook the ship on which he was, and the sailors, who had recognised that their passenger was a holy man, entreated him to save them. Even as the Master whose servant he was had done before him, St. Nicolas at once rebuked the waves, which sank to rest at his first word.

Back again at his monastery, the generous Saint continued his ministrations, living himself in the greatest poverty, and endeavouring to conceal his good deeds. His fame, however, spread far and near, so that, when the Bishop of Myra died, there were many who wished to choose St. Nicolas as his successor. The clergy who met to deliberate prayed earnestly for guidance in the matter, and it was mysteriously revealed to each of them that the man chosen by God as Bishop would be the first to enter the church the next morning. A watch was set, and very early St. Nicolas, who had been up all night on his charitable errands, came to pray, as he thought, alone in the sacred building. He was at once hailed as Bishop, and, in spite of his protests against accepting the dignity, for which, he declared, he was unworthy, he was consecrated without delay. He soon proved how wise had been the choice, for he used his new power with great tact and wisdom, performing miracles of conversion and of healing wherever he went.

During a terrible famine which devastated his diocese, he is said to have miraculously multiplied the bags of wheat on certain vessels charged to supply the Imperial granaries, so that, although from each vessel a hundred hogsheads were taken for the relief of his starving people, the tale of the sacks remained the same. Moreover, the wheat thus filched from the ships was sufficient not only to feed the people, but to sow all the barren lands in the neighbourhood. In spite of this, however, the distress increased, and the famine became so terribly severe in the outlying districts that men were known to eat

their own children. The Bishop was unwearying in his efforts to help the sufferers, travelling day and night to inquire into their distress. One day he halted at the house of a wicked man, who had often stolen children that he might kill and eat them. This had been revealed to the Bishop, and he determined to put an end to the horrible practice. The host, suspecting nothing, dared to serve the limbs of a murdered child at supper, but St. Nicolas, as soon as the dish was put on the table, rose up and reproached the man with his crime. He then, asking no guidance, went to the cellar, where the remains of the little victims had been put in salt, and making the sign of the cross over them, they were all restored to life. The children, who were the sons of a poor widow, were given back to their mother, and the murderer, who was now full of remorse for what he had done, was duly punished, though the manner of his penance is not recorded.

St. Nicolas had been Bishop of Myra for some years, when a rebellion against the Emperor broke out in Phrygia, and a number of officers were sent from Constantinople to put it down. These officers halted at Myra, and the Bishop, knowing how great were the exactions of the Imperial envoys when quartered on the people, invited them to his own house, where he entertained them with princely hospitality. Whilst they were with him a messenger arrived to tell him that the Prefect of the city had condemned three innocent men to death, who were even then about to suffer, and entreated the Bishop to interfere on their behalf.

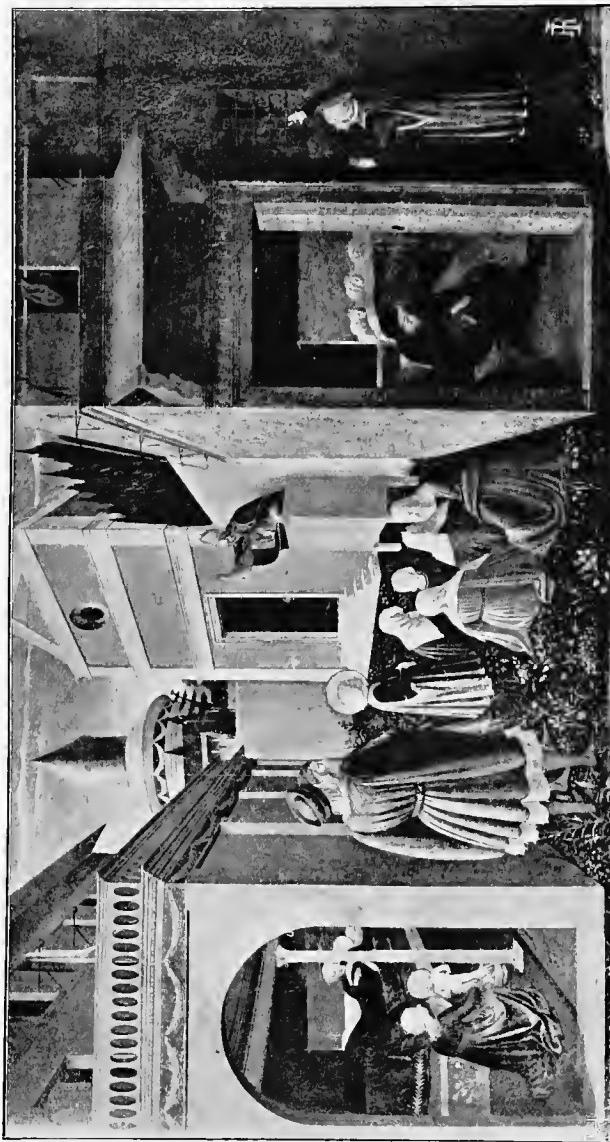
Without a moment's delay St. Nicolas hastened to the rescue, and, followed by his astonished guests, he arrived just in time. The condemned men were kneeling with their eyes bound, and the executioner had already unsheathed his sword, when it was wrenched from his hand by the Bishop, who ordered the bonds to be cut and the victims to be set free. He was obeyed, and the Prefect, who knew he had been in the wrong, humbly sued for forgiveness. It was granted on condition of compensation being given to those who had been unjustly condemned, and the good Bishop, followed by the blessings of all present, returned to his palace.

The Imperial envoys proceeded on their journey much impressed by all they had seen, and, strange to say, some months later they were in their turn unjustly accused and

[Vatican, Rome

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ST. NICHOLAS
By Fra Angelico

Alinari photo]



thrown into prison in Constantinople to await their execution. In their extremity they remembered their visit to Myra and the strange rescue they had witnessed there. They managed to convey a message to St. Nicolas, or, as some say, they merely longed for him to come to them, and their need was revealed to him in a dream. The Bishop in his turn appeared to the Emperor in his sleep, threatening him with the vengeance of Heaven if he did not immediately release his prisoners. Needless to add that Constantine at once obeyed, and the grateful men were allowed to go to Myra to thank their rescuer, taking with them, on the Emperor's behalf, a copy of the Holy Gospels with a cover enriched with precious stones.

According to some versions of the legend of St. Nicolas, he was present at the Council of Nicæa, and was so provoked at the obstinacy of Arius that he struck the arch-heretic on the mouth, for which offence he was forbidden to wear the mitre and pallium distinctive of his rank. When he next celebrated Mass, however, angels appeared to him bringing him back these insignia in token of God's approval of his action. St. Nicolas died at Myra about 342, and was buried in his own cathedral there; but his remains were stolen in 1087 by some Italian merchants, and re-interred with great pomp at Bari, where a beautiful church was erected above them.

A mighty wonder-worker in his lifetime, St. Nicolas has, according to popular belief, wrought even greater marvels since his death. His tomb at Bari was visited by hundreds of pilgrims, who found relief from their sufferings, mental or bodily, through his intercession, and after the translation of his sacred relics their new resting-place was the scene of many miracles. Mariners in peril had but to call upon his name, and many tales are told of his sudden appearance walking on the waves or hovering above the ship when his aid was invoked. On one occasion, commemorated on a quaint leaden medal found in the Seine, and now in the Cluny Museum, he told those who invoked him that they must throw into the sea some oil they were taking to burn at his tomb at Bari, for it had been given to them by a devil, in the form of an old woman. They obeyed, and the tempest ceased immediately, the evil oil bursting into flame as it touched the water. Still more wonderful was the apparition of St. Nicolas to a wicked Jew who had stolen the image of a Bishop out of a church, with a view to

getting it to work private miracles for him. One day when the thief was out some robbers broke into his house and stole his goods. On his return he blamed the image, and in his rage hacked it with a knife. That same night St. Nicolas appeared to the robbers in a dream, bleeding from the wounds which had been inflicted on his effigy, and ordered them at once to take back what they had stolen. They obeyed, and the Jew, who was at once converted, in his turn restored the image, and for the rest of his life refrained from all evil, ever greatly revering the Saint who had saved him.

Another time a nobleman, who through the prayers of St. Nicolas had obtained his heart's desire, a son to inherit his wealth, tried to cheat the holy Bishop of the reward he had promised him, a golden cup for his shrine. The cup had been duly made, but it was so beautiful the owner could not bear to part with it, and had a cheap imitation one presented instead. Of course, the Saint detected the fraud at once, and one day, when the son of so many prayers went to fetch water in the golden cup, the poor little fellow fell into the river and was drowned. The bereaved father in his despair went to pray at the shrine of the aggrieved Saint, offering him a silver cup instead of the lost golden one, and, lo! three times the silver cup rolled to the ground. The gift was evidently repudiated. The poor father redoubled his entreaties for forgiveness, and as he prayed there stood before him the lost child holding the golden vessel in his hands. St. Nicolas had relented, and restored the child to life, telling him, moreover, where to find his father.

Another version of the cup story, or perhaps yet another legend, tells how the only son of a Christian noble was carried into captivity, and made cupbearer to the King of a strange land. One day, when he was serving at the royal table, he suddenly remembered that it was the fête-day of St. Nicolas, which had always been celebrated with rejoicings in his own land. Homesick and miserable, he began to weep, and the King, his master, asked him what was the matter, to which he replied that he grieved because all his own people were at that moment assembled to do honour to St. Nicolas, whilst he was alone in a strange land. 'And who is this St. Nicolas?' cried the King. 'A mighty Saint,' answered the boy. 'Not mighty enough to save thee if I choose to strike thee,' said the wicked King, lifting up his hand to give the poor child a blow. At

that moment the palace was shaken by an earthquake, a mighty wind swept the table clear of its costly dishes, and in the midst of the confusion St. Nicolas appeared, a glory shining about him. As the slave and the King stared at the apparition in wonder, the Saint caught up the boy and whirled away with him, never pausing till he reached the land from which the child had been stolen, when he set him down amongst his kindred and disappeared.

St. Nicolas of Myra is the patron Saint of those who have their business in the deep waters, of lightermen, boat-builders, coopers, chandlers, and brewers. All prisoners, captives, and slaves are supposed to be under his special protection, as well as those unjustly condemned to death. Little children and school-boys are greatly beloved by him; travellers by land and sea never appeal to him in vain, nor need his votaries have any fear of robbers. The quaint and peculiarly inappropriate name of 'clerks of St. Nicolas' is given in Roman Catholic districts to those who appropriate the goods of others, and sooner or later their evil deeds are always discovered, presumably by the hard-worked Saint, who would appear to be at everybody's beck and call.

St. Nicolas is greatly beloved in England: the cathedral of Newcastle is dedicated to him, as are also many churches in seaport towns, such as Great Yarmouth and Liverpool. In olden times his fête-day, December 6, was solemnly celebrated at Eton, and other public schools, as well as in the cathedral of Salisbury. It was in memory of him that the strange custom once prevailed of choosing from amongst the choristers of cathedral towns a boy Bishop, who reigned from December 6 to Holy Innocents' Day, three weeks later, and it was long popularly supposed that the answer, 'N. or M.', to the first question in the English Church Catechism stood for Nicolas or Mary Virgin, the former being the special patron of boys, and the latter of girls.

In Germany it is customary, on the eve of the festival of St. Nicolas, for a visitor wearing the robes of a Bishop to distribute rewards to the good and punishments to the naughty children in families and schools. In America the Dutch settlers used to keep holiday on the day of Santa Claus, as they called St. Nicolas, and it was from them the English borrowed the name of the gift-giver whose business it is to fill the stockings of the little ones on Christmas Eve. St. Nicolas is also the

patron Saint of Russia, where he is known as St. Nicolas of Mojaisk. May 9, the day of the translation of his relics from Myra to Bari, is held sacred, especially in Moscow, and the peasants throughout the country believe in his power to help them out of any difficulty.

As a general rule, St. Nicolas is represented in art as a young beardless man, wearing the mitre and robes of a Greek Bishop. In his right hand he holds a cross or crosier, and on his cope is sometimes embroidered a symbolic group of the Holy Trinity. Another constant attribute is a book, on which are three golden balls or three purses, in evident allusion to the story of his generosity to the three dowerless maidens, although some see in the balls an emblem of the Trinity. Beside the Bishop a tub is also often placed, in which are the three children he restored to life after they had been cut up and salted. A very quaint example of the introduction of this remarkable detail is to be seen in an engraved stone preserved at Soissy-sous-étioles, on which St. Nicolas, his tub with the three children behind him, is presenting Dame Nicole de Chambly to the crucified Redeemer on the left, whilst St. Giles performs the same duty for the Chevalier Gilles Mallet on the right. In the celebrated Heures d'Anne de Bretagne the incident of the rescue of the children is the subject of a miniature in which the Bishop, a noble and stately young man, holds his left hand in the Greek gesture of benediction above the heads of three nude boys, whose attitudes are wonderfully expressive of their joy at their resuscitation. The children in their tub also appear beside St. Nicolas on a leaden medal found in the Seine, and now in the Cluny Museum, which was probably the badge of some Parisian guild that had chosen the Bishop of Myra as patron.

The angel who sometimes attends St. Nicolas has reference to the incident related above, of the restoration of his insignia ; the anchor occasionally beside him is in allusion to his protection of sailors ; the Byzantine church he now and then holds in his hand refers to his position as a Greek Bishop, and the uplifted sword to his defence of the orthodox faith against the Arians.

In the National Collection, Paris, is preserved a very interesting representation on copper of St. Nicolas, brought from Russia in 1815, in which the Bishop stands upon a cushion,



[*National Gallery, London*
THE "ANSIDEI" MADONNA, WITH SAINTS NICHOLAS AND
JOHN THE BAPTIST

By Raphael

such as was in olden times typical of the high social position of those to whom it was given. In one hand he holds a church surmounted by a cross, and in the other a sword, whilst between his shoulders are introduced an image of Christ, and one of the Blessed Virgin, each surmounted by the Greek initials of their names.

In a quaint old Venetian engraving, after an unknown master, three incidents from the life of St. Nicolas are very graphically given. On one side he is throwing a golden ball in at a window; in the centre he is entering a church, a priest hailing him as Bishop; and on the other side he is enthroned, the mitre held over his head by two ecclesiastics.

Andrea Sabbatini, in a painting in the Museum of Naples, has represented St. Nicolas giving a golden ball to each of three maidens kneeling at his feet, whilst their father looks on, and three prisoners also kneeling, with ropes round their necks, await their turn for rescue. Fra Angelico, in a fresco now in the Vatican Gallery, gives a more dramatic rendering of the dowry incident, for the Saint, in the ordinary dress of a citizen, is standing on tiptoe, trying to throw a ball in at a window, and through an open door, just inside which the father is seated in a dejected attitude, the three girls can be seen in bed fast asleep.

Frescoes of scenes from the life of St. Nicolas are of very frequent occurrence in Italy. In the Cappella del Sacramento of the Lower Church of S. Francesco at Assisi, are some fine frescoes, by Giottino, of certain of the miracles of St. Nicolas, including the restoration of a drowned child to life. In the Casa Buonarroti, or House of Michael Angelo, at Florence, is a Predella by Pesellino from S. Croce, giving three incidents of the legend. In S. Croce in the same city still remain, though some of them are much defaced, a few very beautiful interpretations of the miracles by Agnolo Gaddi, or, according to some, Gherardo Starnina, including the Dowry incident, the Resuscitation of the three boys, and the Rescue of a man about to be beheaded. Fra Angelico also introduced many incidents from the life of the popular Saint in the Predella, part of which is at Rome, and part in the Pinacotheca Vannucci at Perugia, of his great Polyptych, once the glory of S. Domenico, Perugia.

The Loss of the golden cup and Restoration of the drowned child are portrayed in some of the windows of Bourges

Cathedral, the story of the Conversion of the Jew is graphically given in the stained glass of Chartres Cathedral, and on the west front of the same building occurs the Dowry incident as well as a rendering of the Tomb of the Saint, from which some very realistic drops of balm are exuding.

Single figures of St. Nicolas also abound. There used to be a celebrated wonder-working one in the Church of St. Martin at Canterbury, and on the west front of Wells Cathedral there is a very quaint representation of the Bishop standing in a tub of water, with a child held in each arm, which is known in the neighbourhood as the 'pancake Saint.' In a twelfth-century fresco in the Cathedral of Chartres St. Nicolas appears with St. James and St. Giles, and he is one of the ecclesiastics in the beautiful sixteenth-century 'Bishop's Window' in St. Aignan, Chartres. His Enthronement is the subject of a grand work by Titian in S. Sebastiano, Venice, in which he is seated in a cathedral choir, whilst an angel hovers above him with a mitre, and the 'St. Nicolas in glory,' attended by Saints Lucy and John the Baptist, by Lorenzo Lotto, in S. Maria dei Carmine, is also very beautiful. The noble character of the Bishop of Myra has been very finely interpreted by Signorelli in his 'Madonna and Saints' of the Arezzo Gallery; by Fra Angelico in the Perugia Altar-piece; by Cima da Conegliano, in his 'Tobias and the Angel' and 'Madonna with Saints,' both in the Venice Academy; by Bartolommeo Vivarini in an Altarpiece in the Frari, Venice; by Il Moretto in the 'Madonna and Child with St. Nicolas,' in S. Maria dei Miracoli, Brescia; and above all by Raphael in the 'Ansiedei Madonna,' in the National Gallery, London. In one of the still remaining panels of a lost Altar-piece by Gentile da Fabriano, in S. Niccolò, Florence, there is a fine figure of St. Nicolas wearing a cope, on which are represented various scenes from the Passion of our Lord.

CHAPTER XX

WESTERN BISHOPS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY

AMONGST the Bishops of the West who have been canonized, and are represented in art with more or less frequency, the earliest in date was St. Mello, or Melanius, for whom some claim the honour of having been the first to occupy the See of Rouen, then known as Rotomagus, whilst others say he was preceded by St. Nicasius. He is supposed to have been a native of Great Britain, and to have been converted from heathenism, when on a visit to Rome, by a sermon of the doomed Pope, St. Stephen I., who took a great fancy to him, and just before his own martyrdom sent him to Northern Gaul.

The Pope is said to have been led to this choice by a vision in which an angel gave him a pastoral staff, telling him it was for the young convert from the North. When St. Stephen woke, the staff was in his hand, and he lost no time in consecrating St. Mello, giving him the sacred token to take with him to his new home. On the way thither the new Bishop healed many with the heaven-sent token, including a man who had accidentally cut his own foot off in hewing wood, and on his arrival at Rotomagus he was received with great enthusiasm by the people, who were at that time suffering greatly from a terrible dragon, which devoured all who ventured without the city. St. Mello, of course, soon vanquished this enemy, and he also overthrew with a word the idol Roth, after whom the town was named. The devil is said to have appeared to him, to remonstrate with him for his interference, but even he was put to rout by the holy man. St. Mello died about 304, and was at first buried in Rouen ; but his remains were translated in the ninth century to Pontoise, where his tomb is still greatly venerated. He appears sometimes amongst other Bishops in works of art, generally with a serpent at his feet and with the miraculous staff in his hand. His wonderful works are commemorated in many quaint old hymns, but the probability is that the whole story of his life is merely an allegory of the victory of good over evil, the true religion over idolatry.

The legend of St. Julian, said to have been the first Bishop

of Le Mans, greatly resembles that of St. Mello of Rouen. He was the first to introduce Christianity into the district now known as Maine ; he overthrew a heathen idol, destroyed a fierce dragon, and in addition to these deeds of valour, related in connection with nearly all the early Bishops of Gaul, he caused a spring of water to gush forth after his people had been suffering from a long drought. He died about 320, and was buried in Le Mans, where his head is still preserved in the cathedral erected long after his time, but the rest of his remains were burnt by the Huguenots in the sixteenth century. In addition to the dragon and the idol a young girl with a jar of water is sometimes introduced beside St. Julian, supposed to represent the servant who was the first to bring to the town the good news of the miraculous spring.

Another Bishop of Mans who was greatly celebrated for his sanctity was St. Liborius, who belonged to a noble family of Gaul, and was consecrated about 348. He died in 397, and was buried in the chief church of his diocese, but in the ninth century his remains were removed to Paderborn. His chief characteristic in art is a book, on which are a number of small stones, because he is said to be able to cure those suffering from stone or gravel. Occasionally a peacock is introduced beside St. Liborius, a symbol which has been variously explained, some looking upon it as an allusion to the legend that, when the Bishop's relics were translated to Paderborn, a peacock flew before the cortège to show the way, in memory of which a peacock's feather is still carried on July 23, in the procession in honour of the Saint. Others are of opinion that the peacock and the peacock's feather are both merely a reminiscence of what is known as the flabellum, or feather fan, still carried before the Pope on occasions of ceremony, the original use of which was to flap away flies from the sacred vessels, and which was first introduced about the time of the consecration of St. Liborius.

St. Hilary of Poitiers, whose fête-day, January 13, has become a well-known date in legal reckoning in England, and whose memory is preserved in many dedications of churches in the British Isles, has been called by St. Jerome the 'Trumpet of the Latins against the Arians,' and by St. Augustine the 'Illustrious Doctor of the Churches.' He takes very high rank amongst the Bishops of the Western Church, on account of his great eloquence, his earnest faith, and the undaunted courage

with which he opposed the Emperor Constantius in the interests of his fellow-Christians. The son of heathen parents of high rank, he was born at Limonum, as Poitiers was then called, in the first half of the fourth century, and was brought up in the religion of his family. He was, however, converted soon after his marriage and the birth of his only child, a daughter, whom he named Agra. His wife, whom he won over to his own way of thinking, consented to his becoming a priest, and in 350 he was elected Bishop of his native town, where he was greatly beloved. After the Council of Milan, at which St. Athanasius was condemned, St. Hilary, who was amongst the dissenting Bishops, was first imprisoned and then banished. He was allowed to return to Limonum about 360, and he died there in 367.

It is related of St. Hilary that on one occasion, when he was preaching in the open air, he could not make himself heard by those at a distance, but that when he prayed for help the ground on which he was standing rose up until he was much higher than his audience. According to another version of the same story, it was at a Church Council that the miracle took place. When he entered the hall the seats were all occupied, and no one offered to make room for him. He therefore seated himself on the floor, remarking quietly that it, too, belonged to the Master he served, when to the astonishment of all present the plank rose up beneath him, and he found himself on a level with his fellow-Bishops. On account of this quaint story, a mound of earth is one of St. Hilary's attributes in art, and because of his eager preaching of the doctrine of the Trinity he sometimes holds the emblem of the equilateral triangle. St. Hilary is credited with having during his exile saved the people of the island of Gallinara, in the Mediterranean, from a plague of serpents, which he either destroyed or drove into a confined space, planting his staff at the entrance, with orders that they were not to pass it. For this reason certain artists have depicted him grasping a staff on which a serpent is coiled, or with his uplifted crosier driving a number of snakes before him. A trumpet is also sometimes given to him, probably because St. Jerome likened him to one, and a child is often introduced beside him, it is supposed in memory of his having restored a little boy to life who had died unbaptized, in order to administer to him the sacred Sacrament.

St. Paulinus of Nola was born at Bordeaux in 353, the son of one of the chief magistrates of Southern Gaul. He was brought up as a Christian, but it was not until after his marriage and the death of his infant son, that he resolved with the consent of his wife, to give up all for God. He had long enjoyed the dignity of a Consul, when at the age of forty he resolved to leave the world and retire to a cell near Nola, there to devote his life to prayer. Five churches already marked the scenes of the labours of his predecessor, St. Felix of Nola, and to these St. Paulinus now added a sixth, in which he was never weary of worshipping. The fame of his holiness spread far and near, and when the See of Nola became vacant he was chosen, much against his will, to occupy it. He had been Bishop but a few months, when the city was besieged by the Goths, and, in spite of every effort on the part of the citizens, it fell into the hands of the enemy. St. Paulinus was taken prisoner with others, but even the fierce heathen respected him for his noble bearing, and he was soon released. It is related, however, that he took the place of the son of a poor widow who was about to be led captive to Africa, and remained a slave for several years, for which reason he is sometimes represented with a figure in chains beside him, and has been chosen patron by the Order of Mercy known as the Trinitarians, whose special aim is the redemption of captives. Whether this sacrifice was really performed or not, it is certain that St. Paulinus died at Nola in 431 surrounded by his loving clergy. He passed away just as the lamps were being lit for vespers, and his last words were: 'I have prepared a lamp for my Lord.' He was buried at Nola, but his remains were later removed to Rome and reinterred in S. Bartolomeo. Amongst the writings he left behind him was a very interesting description of the church he had built in honour of St. Felix, in which he dwells minutely on its ornamentation. A church held in one hand is therefore a constant attribute of his, and his episcopal robes are sometimes replaced by a labourer's simple garments, because he is said to have worked in the garden of his master when he was a slave in Africa. Instances occur, notably in a tenth-century German engraving, of a bell being given to St. Paulinus of Nola, and some assert that he was the inventor of bells, but the symbol is probably merely an allusion to the name of his bishopric, which is supposed to signify bell.

Another much-revered fourth-century Bishop was St. Spiridion of Cyprus, who, though he began life as a shepherd, was from the first singled out for Divine favour. It is related that on one occasion, when some wicked men tried to steal his sheep at night, an invisible power arrested them in the very act, and St. Spiridion found them the next morning rooted to the spot. Having heard their story, he forgave them, released them by his prayers, presented them with a ram, and dismissed them with his blessing. In spite of his lowly origin, Spiridion was chosen Bishop of Tremithus, near Salamis, and is said to have been one of the Christians who were sent to work in the mines during the persecution which broke out about the middle of the fourth century. He is also supposed to have been present at the great Council of Nicæa, but very little is really known about him. He had a daughter named Irene, to whom he was greatly attached, and, according to a touching tradition, she revealed to her father after her death, the exact spot where a great treasure which had been left in her care was hid. For this reason St. Spiridion is sometimes represented with the dead body of a woman lying at his feet. The Bishop also occasionally appears holding what looks like a long pointed thorn in one hand, in supposed allusion to his sufferings in the mines, where it is said one of his eyes was put out by order of Maximianus Galerius. Yet another symbol associated with St. Spiridion is a snake, in allusion to a legend telling how, when a poor man applied to him for aid, the holy Bishop picked up a little snake and offered it to him. The petitioner shrank back affrighted, but as he gazed at the strange gift it turned into solid gold.

Another famous fourth-century Bishop of Gaul was St. Mansuetus of Toul, who is said to have been of Scotch origin, to have converted the Governor of the city to Christianity by restoring to life his son who had been drowned, and is occasionally represented giving back the boy to his parents, or preaching in a wood to a vast crowd. With him must be ranked as an equally zealous Bishop, St. Leu, or Luper, known as the Liberator of Troyes, because he went forth unarmed to meet Attila, and persuaded him to spare his beloved city. Later the defeated General took St. Luper back with him as far as the Rhine, with a view to saving himself from the fury of the people; and when the unwilling hostage returned to Troyes, the gates of the city were closed against him because he was suspected of

having sided with the enemies of his country. He withdrew to a cell in the neighbourhood, and there remained in seclusion for two years, when he was recalled by the unanimous desire of his flock.

St. Lupus is said to have gone with St. Germanus of Auxerre on a missionary journey to England, where he won many souls to the true faith by his eloquence. He lived to a great age, and died at Troyes about 460. He was buried in the chapel of a monastery which had been erected in his honour, but his tomb was violated during the Revolution, and his remains were burnt, with the exception of a piece of the skull, now enshrined in a fine reliquary, on which are engraved various episodes of his long career. In the stained-glass windows of the Cathedral of Troyes St. Lupus is introduced treading a dragon under foot, and before the restoration of the building there used to be a number of quaint mural paintings representing the Interview with Attila; the Parting with his wife before his compulsory journey with the invader; and the Struggle with the demons of England, in which the holy Bishop was seen standing on the beach exorcising a number of evil spirits in the form of imps, clinging to the rigging of a vessel close inshore.

Even more celebrated than St. Lupus of Troyes was St. Martin of Tours, one of the few foreign Saints whose festival is still kept in Protestant England. The founder of monasticism in Gaul, St. Martin, by his noble and consistent bearing, his intrepid courage, and his remarkable eloquence, won the admiration of heathen and Christians alike, and is still greatly venerated throughout Europe, especially in France, the chief scene of his labours.

Born of heathen parents in Hungary, St. Martin was taken, when still a child, to Pavia, where he was educated in all the learning of the day. He was but ten years old when he was converted to Christianity, by whom is not known, but it is related that he one day entered a church where a class of catechumens was being held, and begged to be allowed to join them. His request was granted, but before he was baptized he was enrolled in the cavalry, and when he was about fifteen years old he was sent with his regiment to serve in Gaul. When he was quartered at Amiens in 332, the incident occurred with which the memory of St. Martin is chiefly associated : the gift of half

his military mantle to a poor man who begged of him and his fellow-officers as they were leaving the city one bitter winter's day. It was customary at that time for cavalry officers to wear over their armour a loose white cloak, very like the old Greek chlamys, and this was practically the only protection they had against the cold, however severe. The gift of half of it was, therefore, an act of real self-denial, and Martin's fellow-soldiers laughed at him for his generosity, whilst some of the bystanders jeered at his curious appearance with the mutilated cloak wrapped about him. That same night, however, Jesus Himself, with an escort of angels, is said to have appeared to the young officer, and to have asked him if he recognised the cloak He was wearing. St. Martin looked closely at it, and saw that it was the very piece he had given to the beggar; and as he gazed in astonishment at the radiant figure of the wearer, the Master turned to His attendants, saying: 'Know ye who thus clothed Me? My servant Martin, though he is yet unbaptized.'

Soon after this remarkable experience St. Martin was baptized, but he remained in the army for several years afterwards—some say until he was forty—when he begged for his discharge. It so happened that he made his request just when an invasion of Gaul by the Germans had taken place, and a great battle appeared imminent. Not unnaturally, he was suspected of being afraid of the approaching conflict, and it is related that the Emperor Julian the Apostate himself reproached him in no measured terms for his cowardice. St. Martin, however, answered quietly: 'Place me naked and without defence in the forefront of the battle, and thou wilt see that, armed with the Cross alone, I shall prevail against the legions of the enemy.' The Emperor declared that he should be taken at his word, and ordered him to be imprisoned until the battle should begin; but the very next morning an envoy came from the German camp to sue for peace. Terms were arranged, and St. Martin was released, popular opinion ascribing the happy termination of the war to his prayers.

Set free from his military duties, St. Martin went first to consult St. Hilary of Poitiers, who wished to ordain him deacon and keep him with him. Before taking Orders, however, St. Martin begged to be allowed to go and see his parents, and, his request being granted, he went to Italy, working many

wonders on his way, including the conversion of some robbers who attacked him, the restoration to life of the son of a poor widow, and the casting out of more than one evil spirit. Having converted his mother to Christianity, though his father resisted all his persuasions, St. Martin returned to Poitiers, and was there ordained priest by St. Hilary, who also gave him a little plot of land outside the city, where he built himself a cell, to which to retire for solitary communion with God. This cell eventually became the nucleus of a community of holy men who had begged to be allowed to join St. Martin, who, though he arrogated no authority, drew up a simple code of rules for their guidance. Thus, simply and without ostentation, was founded the first monastery in Gaul, which became the pattern of so many later institutions of a similar kind. From it St. Martin used to go forth to preach to the people of the neighbourhood, and the fame of his eloquence soon spread far and near. Hundreds of heathen were won over to the true faith, and many were the miracles of healing with which the celebrated teacher was credited. On one occasion he restored to life one of his monks, who had died during his temporary absence; on another he brought back the soul of a poor slave who had committed suicide in despair at the unjust anger of his owner, a wealthy nobleman. Master and servant were alike baptized by St. Martin, and, the See of Tours happening to fall vacant soon after the wonderful incident which led to their conversion, the people clamoured for the election of the miracle-worker. When the news of the popular desire was brought to St. Martin, he declared that nothing would induce him to agree to his election, and he shut himself up in his cell, refusing to admit any visitors. He was, however, presently persuaded by some of his own monks, who were in the plot against him, to go to the door of the monastery to give his blessing to a sick person. As he was bending down over the sham invalid, he was seized by some soldiers, and carried by them to Tours, where, still earnestly protesting, he was installed in the episcopal see, amid general rejoicing.

As Bishop St. Martin did his duty nobly, but as far as possible he still led a simple, secluded life. At first he dwelt in a hut by the church, but finding it impossible to get any time for prayer, on account of the crowds who continually flocked to him, he founded a new monastery outside the city, on the banks

of the Loire, which in course of time grew into the great Abbey of Marmontier, long one of the richest communities in France, though the beautiful buildings are now in ruins. Making his monastery his headquarters, the new Bishop waged vigorous war against idolatry, and wonderful indeed are the tales related of the manner in which he carried all before him, marching along followed by some two thousand white-robed attendants, setting fire to the temples and the groves dedicated to false gods. One day some heathen priests are said to have entreated him to spare a fine pine-tree, held specially sacred by them, and the Saint actually succeeded in persuading them to fell it with their own hands, by allowing himself to be bound to it. The people looked on in awe-struck wonder, expecting the Bishop to be slain, but just as the tree was about to fall and crush him to death he made the sign of the Cross. The great mass paused a moment, and then tottered over in the opposite direction, leaving St. Martin unhurt. Sometimes the demons who had haunted the destroyed temples appeared in visible form and mocked him in the presence of all assembled, but he never failed to put them to rout, and on one occasion when the arch-fiend appeared to him wearing royal robes, and declaring that he was Christ Himself come to reward his faithful servant, the holy Bishop replied that he recognised none as his master who did not bear in his body the marks of the Cross, at which the Evil One immediately vanished.

Scarcely less remarkable were the wonders which attended St. Martin on his purely pastoral journeys. In the neighbourhood of Tours there was a little chapel to which many resorted, under the impression that a great martyr was interred in it, but it was revealed to the holy Bishop that the revered remains were really those of a criminal. One day, therefore, when many were on their knees at the shrine, St. Martin suddenly appeared amongst them, and in the name of Christ ordered the spirit of the dead man to declare who he was. Then a terrible form suddenly rose up, and to the Bishop's question, 'Who art thou?' replied that in life he had been a robber, but now he was enduring the just punishment of his crimes. At Treves St. Martin is said to have healed a girl suffering from palsy by putting some sacred oil into her mouth; at Paris he embraced a leper, who was at once cured of his loathsome disease, and on a visit to St. Paulinus of Nola, he rescued that holy prelate

from the blindness with which he was threatened, by merely touching his eyes.

In France a quaint story is current, which is evidently really a version of the legend of the cloak already related, to the effect that one day soon after his election as Bishop, and just as he was preparing to celebrate Mass in the Cathedral of Tours, St. Martin noticed a miserable-looking beggar shivering in the porch. Touched with compassion, he told one of his attendant deacons to give the man a cloak, but the deacon replied that he had not one to spare. At this St. Martin tore off his own upper garment and gave it to the beggar, who received it with the greatest gratitude. The Bishop then proceeded to robe himself, and when the time came for the elevation of the Host his bare arms were seen by the whole congregation. Some were irreverent enough to titter, but their mirth was quickly checked, for a globe of fire suddenly appeared above the head of the generous prelate, whilst his arms were covered with gleaming chains of gold by white-robed angels. St. Martin, who alone seemed unconscious of this extraordinary mark of Divine favour, continued the service as if nothing had happened, but henceforth the veneration in which he was held by all who had either witnessed or heard of the miracle was greater than ever.

In his dealings with the noble and mighty, as well as with the poor and lowly, St. Martin's conduct won him much renown. It is related that when he was the guest of Maximus, and his Imperial host offered him wine in his own goblet, the Bishop, after drinking from it himself, passed it next to his attendant priest instead of at once returning it to the Emperor, thus marking his belief that the humblest of God's servants was more than equal to the greatest secular dignitary. On another occasion St. Martin is said to have been the guest of the Empress, who waited upon him herself, refusing to be seated in his presence. In fact, as time went on he became one of the most powerful men, not only in France, but in the whole of the Roman Empire. Nothing, however, made any difference in his character; to the last he remained a humble worker for God, and, after governing his diocese with the greatest wisdom for thirty years, he died at Cande, a parish in Touraine, whither he had gone to settle some dispute amongst the clergy. When overtaken by his last illness, he was at first full of distress

at having to die so far from home, but he soon resigned himself to the will of God. His last words were, 'Abraham's bosom is open to receive me' and those who stood by declared that as he spoke his face was lit up with a joy that was not of earth. His body was taken to Tours to be buried in the church he had himself founded there, in spite of all the protests of the people of Poitiers and the neighbourhood, who were anxious to retain the sacred remains.

The patron Saint of numerous towns in England and on the Continent, of knights, cavalry officers, tailors—probably because he made one cloak serve for two people—and for some unexplained reason, of the criers of Paris, St. Martin of Tours is, as a rule represented in art as a soldier, not as a Bishop. On an old seal preserved in the Priory of Bollena, in the Diocese of Orange, he is represented on one side on horseback, about to cut his cloak in half to share it with a perfectly nude beggar, whilst on the reverse he is seated, grasping his pastoral staff in one hand. Figures of St. Martin and the beggar are occasionally introduced on the handles of crosiers, as on one at Mans, reproduced in the fourth volume of the '*Mélanges d'Archéologie*', and they are also of frequent occurrence in the sculptures and stained-glass windows of France and England. Notable examples are the sculptures in the tympanum of the right-hand bay of the west front of Chartres Cathedral, and the stained-glass windows in the clerestory of the same building, in which the cloak incident and the vision of Christ identifying Himself with the beggar are both twice introduced. These, with several other incidents of the life of St. Martin, are also given in the sculptures of the church dedicated to him at Clamécy in Nièvre, an interesting survival of the fifteenth century. In the quaint old church of St. Martin at Canterbury various scenes are introduced in one of the windows of the nave; in a modern window in the north-east transept of the Cathedral of Canterbury is enshrined a very notable medallion of ancient glass, with a rendering of the legend of the cloak; in St. Lucy's Chapel, Christchurch, Oxford, the beautiful thirteenth-century windows include the same incident; in St. Martin's Church, Birmingham, are some quaint old mural paintings of scenes from the life of the great Bishop, and his figure constantly appears on rood-screens in old English churches, notably in one at Great Plumstead, Norfolk.

In an engraving by Martin Schöngauer, St. Martin stands with the cloak he is about to cut in two held over the head of a kneeling beggar. In the Royal Collection at Windsor is a very fine painting by Rubens, of which there is a copy by Vandyck at Saventhun in Belgium, representing St. Martin on a beautiful white horse, about to cut his scarlet mantle in half as he turns with a good-natured smile towards a squalid beggar, whilst a woman holds up her child to receive the benediction of the Saint. In a sixteenth-century French miniature, the beggar kneels to receive the cloak from a very young St. Martin, with a halo behind his flowing locks ; in the Chapel of S. José, Toledo, is a fine 'St. Martin and the Beggar,' by El Greco; and in an Altar-piece by Giovanni Francesco Carotto at Verona, the attitude of the future Bishop is full of the deepest humility, for he bends before the beggar as if already recognising in him the Master he so much loved to honour.

The Mass of St. Martin is the subject of a fine painting by Lesueur in the Museum of Tours, originally designed for the Abbey of Marmontier, in which the globe of fire is seen descending, in the presence of numerous spectators, the Bishop alone seeming unconscious of the phenomenon. The Raising to life of a dead Child was well rendered by Lazzaro Baldi in a painting now in the Vienna Gallery, and the Exorcism of an evil Spirit by St. Martin is the subject of a spirited composition by Jakob Jordaens, now in the Brussels Collection.

On account of his skill in casting out devils, or, according to some, because Satan himself appeared beside his death-bed in the hope of winning his soul at the last moment, St. Martin is sometimes represented with a demon at his feet. Now and then a hare is seen beside him, for he is said to have rescued one with a word, after the poor creature had been nearly torn to pieces by dogs. A more constant emblem is a goose, which has been very variously interpreted, but is probably in allusion to the fact that St. Martin's fête-day, November 11, is at the beginning of winter, of which season the goose is typical. 'The white goose,' says a French proverb—that is to say the snow—is a good protection to the young shoots,' and snow is poetically spoken of in France as the 'mantle of St. Martin.' A goose marks the fête-day of the Saint in certain old calendars, and in some districts it is customary to celebrate it by eating roast goose.

St. Martin of Tours is greatly honoured in England, and there are churches dedicated to him in nearly all the English counties. The term Martinmas, is used in Scotland to indicate November 11, which is one of the four days for paying rent north of the Tweed, and when the weather happens to be fine during that month in any part of the British Isles, it is called St. Martin's Summer, in spite of the fact that the beloved Bishop is spoken of as 'St. Martin' in the Winter' in various old English and Latin chronicles.

The successor of St. Martin in the See of Tours was his deacon, St. Brice, or Britius, who had given his superiors a great deal of trouble as a young man, on account of his unbridled temper and insolence, but was for all that greatly beloved by St. Martin. It is related that on one occasion when a sick man asked the young deacon where he should find the Bishop, Brice replied : ' If it is that old dreamer and fool you want, you can see him down there, staring up at the sky in his usual idiotic fashion.' This remark was overheard by St. Martin, who later reproved the young man for his insolence, but at the same time prophesied that he would one day be a Bishop, which must have done much to mitigate the severity of the reprimand. As is so often the case, the prophecy was in the end its own fulfilment, for there seems to have been no reason for the choice of St. Brice, except the fact that he had been nominated by his predecessor. Fortunately, however, he turned over a new leaf when he assumed the responsible position, and during the thirty years of his occupancy of the See of Tours he ruled his people with firmness and tact.

Many stories are told of wonders wrought by St. Brice, chiefly in vindication of his own character, for during the earlier years of his episcopate various false accusations were made against him. To quote one typical instance, a woman declared that the Bishop was the father of her child, and although St. Brice made the new-born infant name the real offender, the people were still unsatisfied until he had carried some burning coals in his robes, which were not even singed, to the tomb of St. Martin. On account of this quaint incident, burning coals are a chief attribute of St. Brice in art, but he is also sometimes represented with a child beside him, from whose lips issue the words 'Non est pater meus.' Occasionally, also, St. Brice is seen serving St. Martin as deacon at the celebration

of Mass, but looking all the time at the devil, who appears in the corner of the composition grinning at two ladies, who are chatting together whilst the solemn service is going on.

Another celebrated French Bishop of the fifth century was St. Germanus of Auxerre, with whom may be ranked Saints Servatius of Tongres, Severus of Ravenna, Zeno of Verona, and Severinus of Cologne, all of whom appear occasionally in works of art, each with some distinctive symbol of his own.

St. Germanus of Auxerre, whose legend resembles in many respects that of St. Martin of Tours, was born about 380 in the city from which he takes his name. The son of noble parents, he was brought up to be a soldier, and having attracted the favourable notice of the Emperor Honorius, he rose to high honour, becoming Governor of an important province. It is said that he was passionately fond of hunting, and used to hang the trophies of the chase upon the trees of the forest of Auxerre, in spite of the remonstrances of St. Amator, then Bishop of the diocese, who reproached him with following the customs of the heathen. The young Germanus only laughed at what was said to him, and his anger may be imagined when he discovered one day that the Bishop had had his trees cut down. He threatened St. Amator with all manner of terrible punishments, and the holy man withdrew for a while, hoping that his fury would abate with time. Presently it was revealed to the Saint in his seclusion that the very man from whom he was hiding would one day succeed him as Bishop, and repenting of his own hasty judgment, he returned to Auxerre to resume his duties. Soon afterwards, as he was officiating in the church, Germanus came in with the rest of the congregation, and St. Amator had the doors locked, so that no one could leave without his knowledge. He then, in spite of the reluctance of the young officer, insisted on ordaining him priest, dismissing him with a prophecy of his future services to the Church. Germanus, it is said, laid aside all his wild ways at once, becoming so earnest a Christian that when St. Amator died in 418 he was chosen Bishop in his place, without one dissentient voice. For thirty years St. Germanus wisely ruled his large diocese, erecting a monastery outside Auxerre, of which the ruins still remain, and in his many journeys winning important victories, not only over the heathen, but over the heretics who at this time greatly vexed the peace of the Church. In 429, he was sent by the Pope

with St. Lupus on a mission to Great Britain, and halting on his way at Nanterre, near Paris, his attention was called to a little maiden, known amongst her playfellows as La pucelette Geneviève, and already remarkable for her loving humility and devotion to Christ. This was the future patron Saint of Paris, whose fame was to overshadow that of the holy Bishop himself, and directly he saw her he knew that she was predestined to great honour. Her parents asked St. Germanus to bless their child, and he consented readily, hanging round her neck a small coin bearing a cross, in memory of the solemn occasion.

The Dedication of St. Geneviève is the subject of one of the fine paintings in the Pantheon of Paris, by Puvis de Chavannes, a beautiful interpretation of what must have been a most touching scene, significant of the simple faith of the time when the incident took place. St. Germanus, with St. Lupus a little behind him, places his hand on the head of the white-robed child, who looks up into his face with an exquisite expression of loving innocence. Near her on the left are her father and mother, their gestures betraying their mingled joy and anguish at the ceremony they know will separate them from their darling, and round about the central group are many reverent spectators, who evidently realize that the Spirit of the Master they all serve is amongst them.

A terrible storm is said to have overtaken the Bishops during their passage of the Channel, but St. Germanus calmed the angry waves by pouring holy water upon them, and after landing in England the course of the missionaries was one long triumph. Wherever they went they healed the sick, restored sight to the blind, and even now and then raised the dead. The most celebrated of their deeds was, however, rather a triumph of human skill than of miraculous power, for, by means of a very simple stratagem, they saved the British army from defeat when it seemed likely to be overwhelmed by a superior force of Saxon invaders. St. Germanus, who had been a soldier for many years before he became a Bishop, led the English into a narrow defile, and ordered them to remain perfectly still until he gave the word, when they were one and all, to shout 'Alleluia!' without intermission until the enemy should retire. The ruse succeeded admirably. The Saxons, who had seen the small body of English retiring before them, came on in full assurance of victory; but as they approached the entrance to the pass

such a deafening noise greeted them that they stopped appalled. The 'alleluias' echoed and re-echoed amongst the surrounding hills till the invaders imagined that an overwhelming force was approaching against them, and, flinging down their arms, they fled in confusion.

St. Germanus is said to have paid a second visit to England in 446, when he was accompanied by St. Severus, and, as is related by Bede, purged the whole land from the Pelagian heresy. On his way back to his own diocese he met a deputation from Brittany, sent to beg him to plead with the Emperor for the remission of a terrible punishment meted out to the Britons for rebellion. Instead of returning to Auxerre, St. Germanus therefore went to Italy, performing many marvels by the way. He was received with the greatest honour at Ravenna, where the Court then resided, the young Emperor Valentinian and the Empress Dowager Placidia, vying with each other in showering costly gifts upon him. On one occasion, when the ass he had ridden died, a messenger was sent to him by Placidia bringing a beautiful horse to take its place, but the Bishop refused to accept it, declaring it was too noble a steed for him. According to a widely-spread legend, he then led the man to the stable containing the corpse of the ass, ordered the motionless animal to arise, and when it obeyed he mounted it, declaring it would serve his time. Very soon after this remarkable incident St. Germanus told his friends that he knew he should never return to Auxerre, for Christ Himself had appeared to him to tell him to prepare for the journey to his eternal home. A few days later he was taken ill, and having exacted a promise from the Empress that his body should be taken back to Auxerre, he peacefully expired. His last wishes were fulfilled, and he was buried in the chapel of the monastery founded by him.

St. Germanus, to whom several churches are dedicated in England in memory of his work in that country, is occasionally represented amongst other Bishops with a donkey at his feet, in allusion to the legend related above. More rarely a dragon is introduced beside him, because during his episcopate the last relics of idolatry disappeared from his diocese, and in some old MSS. he appears leading a seven-headed reptile. Père Guérin, in his 'Petits Bollandists,' refers to the church of St. Germanus, near Troyes, in which a stained-glass window represents various scenes from the legend of St. Germanus, including

the Return to France of his dead body, escorted by the Emperor, Empress, and a great following of nobles. In the central light angels are seen carrying the soul of the Bishop to heaven in the form of a little child.

Of St. Servatius, Bishop of the ancient city of Tongres, in the Belgian province of Limburg, next to nothing is really known, in spite of the fact that he is very constantly introduced in works of art, and has many more attributes than the celebrated St. Germanus of Auxerre. He is credited with having received St. Athanasius during his banishment, taken a prominent part in the Council of Sardica, and foretold the incursion of the Huns. He is even said to have gone to Rome to pray at the tomb of St. Peter for protection from the invaders, but it was revealed to him that the punishment was considered necessary on account of the wickedness of the people of Gaul, and he sadly set out to return to his own diocese, intending quietly to await events there. On his way, however, he fell into the hands of the barbarians, who were already overrunning Italy, and they tried to put him to death in his sleep, but he was protected from them by the constant presence of a fine eagle which overshadowed him with its wings. For this reason an eagle is generally associated with St. Servatius, but occasionally its place is taken by an angel placing a mitre in his hand, for it is related that before he had any idea of being chosen Bishop, an angel brought him a mitre and a pastoral staff.

St. Servatius is said to have brought with him from Rome a big key given to him by St. Peter himself, and for this reason, or more probably as a symbol of the spiritual power he wielded as Bishop, he is sometimes represented with a key in his hand, notably on the seal of the Cathedral of Maestricht, to which the episcopal seat was transferred on the destruction of Tongres by the Huns. A dying dragon is another attribute of this popular Saint, in allusion possibly to his success in dealing with heretics; a fountain of water is often seen springing up in response to a blow from his pastoral crozier, and in some old Belgian engravings he is pointing to a tomb in the background, possibly in allusion to his visit to the resting-place of St. Peter.

St. Servatius is by some supposed to have lived until after the destruction of Tongres, whilst others assert that he did not witness the fulfilment of his prophecy, but expired whilst still

a prisoner in the hands of the Huns. He was probably buried at Maestricht, where there is a fine church named after him, and of which he is the patron Saint. He is supposed to be able to secure the happy issue of dangerous enterprises, to be able to protect his votaries from the ravages of rats and mice, and to cure those suffering in any way with their feet, for which reason he is sometimes represented pointing with his staff at the foot of a man or woman beside him.

St. Servatius is also honoured in Belgium and Germany as one of the so-called 'Snow Saints,' the other two being Saints Mamertus and Pancras, in allusion to a quite modern story to the effect that when King Frederick II. of Prussia reproached his gardener for the backward state of the trees in the royal orangery, the man replied, 'What can you expect, before we have passed the fête-days of the Snow Saints?' that is to say, May 11, 12, and 13.

Very little more is really known of St. Severinus of Verona than of St. Servatius of Tongres, but he is supposed to have been born at Verona, about the middle of the fourth century, and to have been a weaver by trade. When his predecessor in the See of Ravenna died, he was as usual busily engaged at the loom, but on the day when all the clergy assembled in the principal church to choose a new Bishop, Severinus threw aside his shuttle, and told his wife he meant to go and see what was going on. She replied that he had much better stop at home and do his work, and when he persisted in his intention, she called after him, 'Mind you don't get made a Bishop yourself!' Her words were prophetic, for it is related that when the humble weaver made his way into the church, a dove flew down and rested on his shoulder, which was at once accepted as a sign of the Divine will that he should be elected. He became Bishop, and after ruling wisely over his diocese for many years, he died peacefully in 389. He was buried at Rayenna, but his remains were later translated to Mainz, where a church was erected in his honour. The people of Ravenna claim that St. Severinus was the first of twelve Bishops who were selected through the sign of the dove, and an annual fête commemorates them under the name of the 'Columbini.'

In memory of his original occupation, St. Severinus is generally represented in workman's clothes, with a shuttle peeping out of his pocket, the mitre beside him being the only

token of his dignity as a Bishop. He is supposed to take special interest in weavers, tailors, and all who aid in the making of clothes.

St. Zeno of Verona is said to have been of African birth, and to have been educated by St. Ambrose of Milan, to whom he was devotedly attached. He was very silent and reserved as a child, and only laughed on one occasion when he was walking in Milan with the great Bishop. The story goes that the two had been talking of some serious subject, when all of a sudden the boy burst into an uncontrollable fit of merriment, and when his teacher asked him what was the matter, he replied : ' I saw such a funny thing; did you not notice it also ? That lady sweeping along in front of us had a little demon sitting on her train, and when she stepped over that gutter, he fell into the water with a great splash.' St. Ambrose had seen nothing, and reproved Zeno for his levity ; but the boy insisted that it was no nonsense, ' the poor little devil really had been there.' Later, this significant incident was remembered, for as Zeno grew older he is said to have developed a special power of recognising evil spirits, and he often cast them out before those possessed by them were aware of their misfortune. Amongst many others he saved the daughter of the Emperor, who was so grateful that she took the crown off her own head and placed it on that of her deliverer.

St. Zeno was probably elected Bishop of Verona in 362, at a time when the church in that city was greatly vexed with internal dissensions. By his tact and charity, however, he quickly effected a great change, and when he died about 380, heresy had been almost completely stamped out in his diocese. He was buried in Verona, and his tomb is now enshrined in the beautiful Romanesque church named after him, in which is also preserved a large porphyry bowl, called the Coppa di San Zenone, used according to some, for baptizing converts during the Bishop's lifetime, but according to others, for washing the feet of the pilgrims who flocked to invoke his aid after his death.

St. Zeno is generally represented, as in an old painted marble Statue in his church at Verona, wearing his Bishop's robes, and with a fish hanging from his crozier, an emblem variously explained, certain authorities looking upon it merely as a symbol of its owner's belief in Christianity and his position

as a fisher of men, whilst others think it has reference to a legend to the effect that St. Zeno lived entirely on the fish he caught himself in the Adige. In any case the Bishop is the special patron of fishermen, and is said to have more than once interfered to save his votaries from the perils of the deep. Once when the river rose to such a height as to swamp the city, the Church of S. Zeno remained high and dry, the waters forming a rampart all around it, so that the congregation could not get out, but were, as St. Gregory the Great expressed it, 'like the three children in the fire in the time of Nebuchadnezzar.'

St. Severinus of Cologne is specially noted in the history of the Church for the work he did in restoring the faith after the terrible invasion of the Huns, for which reason, or perhaps on account of his having founded a church in honour of Saints Cyprian and Cornelius, he is generally represented holding an ornate building in his hand. It is related that immediately after the death of St. Martin of Tours, St. Severinus, who was at prayer at the time, heard the songs of the angels who were bearing the soul of his lost friend to heaven. He called his archdeacon and asked if he had heard anything. The reply was in the negative, and although the Bishop declared that the most beautiful singing was still going on, no sound reached the ears of his companion. Fearing that he would not be believed when he should relate the story later, St. Severinus fell on his knees and entreated God to give him a witness. He was immediately answered; the singing was now heard by the archdeacon also, and together the two listened enthralled until the voices of the angels died away. 'St. Martin is safe in heaven now,' said the Bishop as he rose from his knees, and soon afterwards a messenger arrived confirming the news of the death, at the very moment when the music first attracted the attention of St. Severinus.

Soon after the revelation of the death of St. Martin, St. Severinus died, and was buried at Cologne, where his memory is still held in great honour. It is, however, doubtful whether the window in the church bearing his name represents scenes from his life or from that of another St. Severinus, who lived somewhat later and was the colleague of St. Amandus at Bordeaux.

Another Bishop held in high esteem in the North of Europe was St. Donatian of Rheims, who is often repre-

sented, as in a quaint painting in the Museum of Bruges, in his full episcopal robes, holding the singular attribute of a small wheel, on each spoke of which is fixed a burning candle. This is in allusion to an extraordinary incident said to have taken place in his childhood. He was out walking with one of his father's servants, when the man, in a fit of ill-temper, pushed him into the river as they were crossing a bridge, and left him to his fate. A holy man of Rheims, touched by the agony of the bereaved parents, told them to place a wheel set with burning candles on the river-bank; the wheel of its own accord followed the course of the stream and stopped at a certain spot. Some men dived into the water opposite the wheel, and brought up the child, who, strange to say, was still alive. The miracle is referred to in the sixteenth-century Missal of Cambrai, an incidental proof of the strength of the popular belief in it; but it must be added that this explanation of the wheel is not accepted by all authorities. Père Cahier, for instance, after remarking that St. Donatian is invoked against thunder, suggests that his wheel may have reference to the words of Psalm lxxvi., verse 19, 'vox tonitruitui in rota,' translated in the Douai version, 'the voice of Thy thunder in a wheel.' The same author remarks that the candles on St. Donatian's wheel are made of twisted tapers, adding that the original meaning of the word 'torch' was twisted.

Some confusion appears to have arisen between St. Donatian of Rheims, whose body was brought to Bruges by Count Baldwin of Flanders in 863, and interred in a church since destroyed, and two other saints of the same name, one a Bishop of Fiesole, of whom next to nothing is known, and the other a martyr, whose remains were found in the Catacombs of S. Agnese at Rome in 1649, and sent to Munster-Eiffel, where they are still much revered. It is related that when the funeral cortège bearing the relics passed through Cologne a terrible storm, which was only allayed by the intercession of the Saint, broke over the city. Whether St. Donatian of Rheims has or has not filched from a namesake an honour not his own, he is eagerly invoked for protection in thunder-storms, especially in Bruges, whose patron Saint he is, and it is not unusual for him to be represented with masses of clouds rent by lightning above his head, whilst beside him a little angel is putting out a fire by pouring water from a pitcher. The doubt as to

his identity is further reflected in the fact that the Bishop's robes are sometimes replaced by armour, and the crosier by a sword.

CHAPTER XXI

SOME HOLY WOMEN OF THE FOURTH AND FIFTH CENTURIES

AMONGST the holy women of the fourth century who have been counted worthy of canonization, though they escaped the martyrdom which befell so many of their fellow-believers, none are more highly esteemed than is St. Paula of Rome, the much-loved friend of St. Jerome.

Born in 347 of patrician parents, the future Saint was early betrothed to a wealthy young noble named Toxotius, and it was not until she was left a widow, after several years of married happiness, that she gave any serious thoughts to religious subjects. The mother of four girls and one son, the last born not long before his father's death, she became oppressed with a dread of losing them, too, and spent much of her time weeping over her unworthiness to have charge of their education. Whilst still in this somewhat morbid state of mind St. Paula fell under the influence of St. Jerome, who had come to Rome to attend a Council convened by Pope Damasus, and by his eloquent sermons stirred up many to renounce the world, as he himself had done. Fired by all she heard of the holy lives led by Saints Antony, Hilarion, and other hermits, the bereaved widow was seized with a desire to emulate their example, forgetting in her zeal for renunciation the need her children had of her. Two of her daughters were, it is true, now married, but the other two, Eustochia and Rufina, with the little boy, Toxotius, were still entirely dependent on her. When, however, she confided her difficulties to St. Jerome, he encouraged her to give up everything and retire to the desert, urging that the greater the sacrifice, the greater the merit. She resolved, therefore, to go to Palestine, taking Eustochia, who shared her enthusiasm, with her, but leaving Rufina and Toxotius in the care of her brother. A touching scene is said to have taken place when St. Paula parted from her children, who came down to the beach with her, and, with uplifted hands and many tears, entreated her

not to leave them. Hardly able to resist them, the mother yet managed to turn her head away, praying for strength to endure to the end, and she never once looked round till the vessel was out of sight of land.

After visiting many of the hermits of Egypt and Syria, the travellers arrived at last at Jerusalem, where St. Paula eagerly visited all the holy sites, becoming more and more convinced that she had made a right choice in coming to the Holy Land. In the end she decided to settle at Bethlehem, where she had a little cell built for herself and Eustochia, which very soon became the nucleus of an important community of religious women, who, attracted by the fame of her sanctity, flocked to join her.

Not long after her arrival at Bethlehem, St. Paula heard of the death of Rufina, and occasionally news came to her of her boy, who grew up and married. She never saw him again, and, although her heart probably yearned over him, she never expressed any regret at having left him. For twenty years she laboured unceasingly for the good of others, winning so great a reputation for wisdom that she was often, it is said, consulted by St. Jerome himself. On her death, which took place in 404, the holy Abbot, writing to condole with Eustochia, who had succeeded her as Abbess, said, 'If all my limbs were changed into tongues, and took as many voices, I could say nothing worthy of the virtues of the holy and venerable Paula. Noble by birth, she was yet more noble by sanctity; formerly powerful through her wealth, she became yet more so through the poverty of Jesus Christ'; a eulogy significant of the spirit of the times, when it seemed impossible to serve God in the world, and the commandment to forsake all to follow Christ was so often literally obeyed.

St. Paula and her daughter are generally represented together, wearing the dress of pilgrims, but occasionally the former is in the robes of a nun, and carries a book, in allusion to her foundation of the nunnery at Bethlehem. Sometimes St. Paula appears prostrate before the cross, or pressing the instruments of the Passion to her breast. Now and then she kneels in adoration at the manger, her face bathed in tears in the extremity of her devotion; and instances occur of a scourge being placed in her hand, in allusion merely, it is supposed, to her rigorous mental discipline, rather than to actual self-

inflicted torture. Sometimes St. Jerome and St. Eustochia kneel on either side of St. Paula at the manger, but actual incidents from her life are rarely represented. In the sixteenth-century *Legionario* of Venice, however, there is a quaint engraving representing the Embarkation for Palestine, in which Toxotius, as a boy of about seven, stands with Rufina on the beach, trying in vain to attract his mother's attention.

With St. Paula may be ranked St. Macrina, the grandmother of St. Basil the Great, who is sometimes represented with a stag beside her, because she is said to have been miraculously fed by one during her retirement in the desert for meditation and prayer, and St. Marcellina, the sister of St. Ambrose, who after superintending her brother's education, went with him to Milan, when he became Bishop.

Although she never actually joined any sisterhood, St. Marcellina dedicated her life to God, superintending from the palace of St. Ambrose the community of virgins founded by him, and she is therefore occasionally represented receiving a veil from the Pope and clasping in her hands a little cross, the symbol of faith and renunciation. There is a fine kneeling statue of her by Pucetti in the Church of S. Ambrogio at Milan.

Unique in the history of the Church is the position of St. Pulcheria, who virtually ruled the Roman Empire for nearly forty years, first in the name of her brother Theodosius II., although she was but two years his senior, and after his death in that of her nominal husband, Marcian. Born in the last year of the fourth century, which had witnessed so vast a change in the position of the Christians, St. Pulcheria was the daughter of the Emperor Arcadius and the grand-daughter of Theodosius the Great. At the early age of fifteen she was unanimously proclaimed Augusta, and chosen as the guardian of her young brother, whom she brought up to be an earnest Christian, though she failed to make him a good ruler.

One of the first public acts of the new Augusta was deeply significant of the spirit of the times, and has been very differently criticised by historians. With her two young sisters, Arcadia and Marina, she made a vow of lifelong chastity in the Cathedral of St. Sophia at Constantinople, in the presence of the clergy and a large congregation, presenting to the Primate a gem-studded tablet of gold bearing in Greek the registration of the vow. With a wisdom beyond her years,

Pulcheria thus protected herself from the chief danger of her position, the importunities of suitors, and under her rule the palace of Constantinople was to all intents and purposes a nunnery, in which the Empress, her sisters, and their attendants, led a life of austere self-denial and usefulness. Many beautiful churches were built at the expense of St. Pulcheria, including three dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, in one of which was placed the celebrated portrait of the Mother of the Lord, said to have been painted by St. Luke, and already referred to in connection with that Apostle.* To the initiative of the Empress was also due the meeting of the great Council of Chalcedon, summoned by Marcian after the death of Theodosius, in which the heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches were alike condemned. In a word, throughout her long reign St. Pulcheria never ceased to promote the interests of peace in the Church. Her memory is still venerated by Greek and Roman Catholics as that of one of the greatest Saints of the fifth century, and her noble figure in her Imperial robes, with the sceptre and the lily of chastity in her hands, sometimes alone, sometimes with her sisters on either side, is constantly introduced in ecclesiastical decoration. Strange to say, no artist has yet chosen as a subject the impressive scene of the dedication of the three maidens in St. Sophia. Occasionally the Empress is represented leaning on a tablet on which is inscribed, not the celebrated vow, but the single word *θεοτοχος*, in reference to the condemnation of Nestorianism during her reign.

Celebrated contemporaries of St. Pulcheria, who occasionally appear in works of art, were Saints Euphrosyne, Euphrasia, Melania, and Pelagia the penitent. The first-named, who is represented in the habit of a monk, is said to have been taken by her father, when a girl of eighteen, to see a certain Abbot, to whose intercession with heaven her very existence was due. She fell so in love with what she saw of life in the monastery that she longed to become a monk. On her return home the idea took entire possession of her soul, and, disguising herself as a man, she went to the Abbot to ask admission to his convent. He, suspecting nothing, welcomed her gladly; she took the name of Brother Esmeraldus, and her sex was never discovered. Her father mourned bitterly over her loss,

* 'The Saints in Christian Art,' vol. i. p. 47.

and her Superior actually sent her home to him with a message of comfort. Not until she felt herself dying did she own the truth, but just before the end she sent for her father, confessed all to him, and made him promise to prepare her body for the grave himself. He forgave her, and it is said joined the monastery in which she died after the funeral.

St. Euphrasia, who is represented embracing a crucifix, treading a dragon under her feet, or struggling with a monster who is trying to throw her into a well from which she was about to draw water, was born at Constantinople of wealthy, some say of royal, parents. She was taken as a child to the desert of Thebes by her widowed mother, who spent her large fortune in good works, and the little Euphrasia was only seven years old when she in her turn resolved to dedicate her life to God. She was led to do so, it is said, by seeing the arms of the crucified Redeemer move, as if to embrace her, when she was clasping a crucifix in the ardour of her devotion. She was at once placed in a convent, where she remained for the rest of her life, winning many a signal victory over the temptations of the Evil One.

St. Melania, called the Younger to distinguish her from her grandmother of the same name, is represented holding a church in her hand, because she built an important monastery in Palestine. She is said to have retired from the world with her husband, a young noble called Pinian, on the death of their two children in infancy, and to have led a life of the greatest holiness until his death, when she went to join her grandmother at Jerusalem. There, having spent all her money on good works, she shut herself up in a convent she had founded, acting as the servant of the humblest of the novices till she died at the age of fifty-eight.

The story of St. Pelagia is involved in great obscurity, some asserting that there were two penitents of that name, others that there was only one, to whom all the experiences related rightly belong. The most generally received opinion is, however, that there were in the fifth century two Pelagias who withdrew from Antioch to the Mount of Olives to seek peace in lonely communion with God. Of one, who is also known as Margaret, it is related that, after leading an evil life at Antioch, she dwelt alone in a cave disguised as a monk for many years, drawing crowds to her retreat on account of her supposed

miracles. The other, whose story is not unlike that of Philemon's sister in Kingsley's 'Hypatia,' was a young actress, who was so beautiful that all who saw her fell in love with her. It is said that one day, when St. Nonnus of Heliopolis was preaching from the steps of a church at Antioch to a vast crowd assembled in the market-place, Pelagia happened to pass by, and immediately the attention of all present was transferred to her. A great silence fell upon the audience, as their favourite, apparently unconscious of the sensation she was creating, made her way slowly amongst them, and in the pause the Bishop put up an earnest prayer that a creature so divinely lovely might be rescued before it was too late. The next day St. Nonnus was preaching again, and Pelagia felt an irresistible desire to go and hear him. She therefore joined the audience, and this time the Bishop went on speaking without taking any notice of her, or of the excitement her presence was causing around her. The people, too, seeing that Pelagia wished to listen, respected her desire, and the preacher poured forth an eloquent appeal that all present would repent before the day of grace was past. When the sermon was over, Pelagia sought the holy man and begged him to teach her how to be good. He told her she must give up all the wealth her numerous suitors had showered upon her, and make a public declaration of her penitence, before she could be baptized. With touching submission she obeyed: cut off her beautiful hair, clad herself in sack-cloth, and distributed all her jewels, fine clothes, etc., to the poor. Once more she appeared in the market-place, this time to express in the presence of weeping crowds, her deep penitence for all she had done wrong. The terrible ordeal over, she was baptized by St. Nonnus, after which she went alone to the scene of her Master's Passion, where she spent the rest of her life in prayer. She is said to have died in a cave in the Mount of Olives, and until the twelfth century, when they were lost, her ashes are supposed to have been preserved in an urn at Jerusalem.

A quaint and somewhat vulgar engraving, which was at one time much in vogue in the North of Europe, represents St. Pelagia in the motley dress of a comic actress performing conjuring tricks in a street, accompanied by a dog or a monkey. There can, however, be no foundation for this interpretation of her legend, for one so celebrated for her beauty, as she

undoubtedly was, is not likely to have had to earn her livelihood in such a manner in the refined city of Antioch. Hippolyte Flandrin was probably nearer the truth when he represented the fair penitent in his celebrated frieze in the Church of St. Vincent de Paul, Paris, taking the jewels from her neck, and with a mask at her feet, in allusion to her profession before she left the world. Elsewhere she appears receiving instruction from a Bishop, or alone in the desert kneeling before a crucifix, and occasionally an instrument of music is introduced at her feet, in memory of her having been a public singer.

CHAPTER XXII

ST. GENEVIÈVE, QUEEN CLOTILDA, KING SIGISMUND, AND ST. MÉNÉHOULD.

THE legend of St. Geneviève, the patron Saint of Paris, is full of pathetic beauty. The daughter of parents in a very humble position in life, she was born, in 421, at Nanterre, a few miles from Paris, and from her very infancy seemed to be set apart from other children by the earnest gravity of her character. She is said to have been employed to guard the sheep of a farmer near her home, and to have been amongst those who went to see Saints Germanus and Lupus, when they halted at Nanterre on their way to England. Geneviève was then only seven years old, but her beautiful face, with its loving expression, attracted the attention of St. Germanus, and her parents told him of their wish that she should receive his blessing. He called the little maiden to him and asked her if she were prepared to dedicate her whole life to Christ. She said she was, and he then solemnly blessed her and gave her a medal, or, according to another version of the story, picked up a coin which happened to be lying near, on which a cross was inscribed, and told her to wear it always in memory of her vow. The child looked upon this token as a sacred possession, the seal of her betrothal to her heavenly bridegroom, for amongst the French peasantry a piece of money is the symbol of the dowry of a wife. She wore it for the rest of her life, and it was probably buried with her.

For the next seven years St. Geneviève dwelt quietly at home, earning her own living as a shepherdess, and submitting herself meekly to her parents in all things, except when they interfered in any way with the performance of her religious duties. It is related that one day, when she wanted to go to church at an inconvenient time, her mother lost temper with her, and gave her a box on the ear, a hasty action for which the poor woman was terribly punished, for she immediately became quite blind. Geneviève was terribly distressed, and prayed earnestly that her mother's sight might be restored, but it was not until more than a year afterwards that her petition was granted. It was then revealed to her that she must fetch water from the well of Nanterre, make over it the sign of the cross, and bathe the sufferer's eyes with it. She obeyed, with the best results, for the poor woman was able to see again as well as ever, and was henceforth most careful not to thwart her powerful child.

At the age of fifteen, St. Geneviève with two other saintly-minded maidens, publicly renewed her vows in the presence of the Bishop of Paris, remaining, however, with her parents, to whom she was devoutly attached, until their death, when she went to live in Paris, where she lodged with an old kinswoman who was also her godmother. There she devoted herself to good works, visiting and nursing the sick, winning from them much loving gratitude, but suffering also greatly from certain wicked calumnies which those who were jealous of her great reputation for sanctity delighted to spread abroad. Her very life was sometimes in danger, but her faith and courage never failed, and when things were at the worst her old friend St. Germanus happened to come to Paris, probably on his second mission to England. He looked upon St. Geneviève as his own spiritual daughter, and he quickly put a stop to the calumnies which were being circulated about her, by publicly declaring her to be the special favourite of heaven. No sooner had the holy Bishop passed on his way, however, than all the old trouble was renewed. It is even said that a plot was laid to drown St. Geneviève in the Seine, but this was frustrated by the fortunate arrival of a messenger from St. Germanus, no less a person than the Archdeacon of Auxerre, bringing with him a gift of blessed bread for the persecuted girl.

The long procession in the train of the Archdeacon served as

a useful object-lesson to those who compassed the death of the Saint, for it proved with what powerful friends they would have to deal if evil befell her. She was henceforth left unmolested, and when a little later Paris was besieged by Childeric, and the people were suffering terribly from famine, she won all hearts by her devotion and practical ability in dealing with the emergency. Not only did she stint herself of the very necessities of life for the sake of others, but she also organized and led an expedition down the Seine to fetch food from Troyes, returning in triumph with a load of corn, having, it is said, stilled a furious tempest by her prayers on the way. When Paris fell, the conqueror, though a heathen, sought out St. Geneviève, the fame of whose exploits had reached him, and promised to grant any request she might make to him. She replied by pleading for mercy on the prisoners taken in the siege, whose only fault had been their patriotism, and, true to his word, Childeric released them all. On the death of the conqueror, his son Clovis became master of Paris, and it is claimed by the admirers of St. Geneviève that it was partly through her influence that the new ruler was converted to Christianity, though others, with more probability, assert that his wife, Queen Clotilda, was the means of the change in his belief. Whichever be the truth, there is no doubt that Clovis and Clotilda both became devotedly attached to St. Geneviève, and it was in a great measure due to her initiative that they commenced building the first Christian church within the walls of the city, which was completed after their deaths, and occupied the site of the present Pantheon. St. Geneviève is also looked upon as the real foundress of the celebrated Abbey of St. Denis, outside the town, for she it was who replaced the ruined chapel above the tomb of the martyred Bishop, after whom it is named, with a stately church, and revived the pilgrimage to the shrine, which had long been discontinued.

The biographers of St. Geneviève further relate that when the Huns, under the fierce barbarian leader Attila, invaded France, and were threatening the capital itself, it was due to her intercession that Paris was saved. The mere rumour that the Scourge of God, as he was called, was approaching caused such a terrible panic amongst the inhabitants that they would no doubt have fallen an easy prey had their fears been realized. St. Geneviève, however, followed by a train of holy women,



THE DEDICATION OF ST. GENEVIEVE

By Puvis de Chavannes

[*Pantheon, Paris*

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went up to the ramparts, and, standing, on the wall, she prayed aloud that God would avert the danger, or, if it must come, that He would give His people strength to maintain the right. On receipt of the news that the hordes of the enemy had actually turned aside from their march, and gone southwards, on the very day when St. Geneviève put up her petition, the Parisians became nearly frantic with joy, falling prostrate at the feet of their deliverer, as they called her, whenever she appeared, so that her progress through the streets was like that of a victorious general.

St. Geneviève died in 512 at the age of eighty-nine, one year after King Clovis was called to his rest, and was buried beside him in the unfinished church originally begun in honour of Saints Peter and Paul, but later named after her, and now replaced by the Pantheon.

Year by year the veneration in which St. Geneviève was held increased, the fame of the miracles wrought at her tomb spreading far and near. In 550 St. Eligius, the goldsmith Bishop of Noyon, made with his own hands a beautiful shrine in which the relics of the much-loved Saint were placed, but, unfortunately, it was destroyed and its contents were burnt during the Revolution. The only actual relic of St. Geneviève still retained by Paris is the stone coffin in which her body once rested, preserved in a chapel of the sixteenth-century Church of St. Étienne du Mont, not far from the Pantheon.

Many quaint legends have gathered about the memory of St. Geneviève, who in spite of all the terrible vicissitudes the city of her adoption has passed through, has still retained her hold upon the affections of the people of Paris. From first to last it is said she was singled out for persecution by the Evil One, who knew full well how formidable an adversary she was. One of his most persistent efforts to disconcert her was by blowing out her candle when she was walking in procession with other holy women. Sometimes she relit her candle herself, how is not told, but more often an angel either prevented it from being blown out or lighted it again directly. In various old engravings St. Geneviève is represented walking along with an open book in her hand, apparently unconscious that the long candle she is holding is attacked on one side by a winged demon with a pair of bellows, and protected on the other by an angel who is lighting it with a torch. Outside the Church of

St. Nicholas des Champs in Paris is a quaint Statue of the patron Saint with an imp clinging to her shoulders, and blowing at her candle with a pair of bellows which he rests upon her neck, whilst she gazes abstractedly before her as if nothing at all unusual were going on. St. Geneviève appears again in the west front of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, this time with the defeated devil crouching at her feet, and in certain old stained-glass windows she is introduced protecting her candle from interference. Modern artists, however, prefer representing her as a shepherdess minding her flock, generally with a distaff and spindle, more rarely with a book, although if she really were a shepherdess she is not likely to have been able to read. Certain recent authorities, including Père Cahier, are, however, of opinion that St. Geneviève was no mere peasant, and see in her legend a mere allegory of her rescue of the sheep of Paris from the wolves of Attila, instancing an old engraving in which the ramparts of the city are converted into a kind of sheepfold, with St. Geneviève and her trembling flock about her within it, whilst the wolves are raging without. As a matter of fact, the supposed interview between St. Geneviève and Attila represented in a modern group of sculpture by Maindron in the portico of the Pantheon, never took place, and the artists who contented themselves with giving a bunch of keys to St. Geneviève, to signify her deliverance of the city, were better inspired than was the sculptor of this far from satisfactory group.

The medal with the cross, supposed to have been given to St. Geneviève by St. Germanus is, of course, one of her most distinctive characteristics, and appears either in the form of a clasp fastening her robe or is suspended round her neck. The book or breviary indicative of her devotion to the study of religion is sometimes replaced by a loaf of bread in one hand, or a number of loaves held in a fold of her robes, in allusion to St. Geneviève's voyage down the Seine to fetch food for the besieged, and the palm now and then given to her implies her readiness to lay down her life for Christ, although the sacrifice was never demanded.

St. Geneviève was credited during her lifetime with the performance of many miracles. When, for instance, the church in which she was later to rest was being built, and materials were running short, she told the workmen to go to a certain spot in

the forest, where they would find all they wanted, and there they discovered two huge pits full of lime, with quantities of timber and stone piled up beside them. Again, when the men were weary and thirsty, the Saint gave them a vessel of wine, which always remained full, however much was taken out of it. In fact, until her death she was ever ready to use her influence with Heaven in favour of those engaged in the pious work of church-building, and even after she was taken from earth, her intercession continued to be wonderfully effective. The oil of a lamp lit at her shrine was never consumed, although some of it was taken almost daily for the use of the sick, and by it many wonderful cures were effected, including the restoration of sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf. Once, when the Seine had risen to an abnormal height and all the houses in the neighbourhood had been flooded, including that in which St. Geneviève had died, her bed was found still dry, with a wall of water forming a kind of rampart about it. On another occasion, when a poor woman insisted on working on Sunday, pleading that the Blessed Virgin herself knew too well what poverty meant to blame her, her fingers became so firmly fixed to the comb with which she was preparing wool, that she could not unclasp them until she went to pray at the shrine of St. Geneviève.

The most remarkable of all the after-death wonders performed by St. Geneviève, and the one which took the greatest hold on the popular imagination, was, however, that of her interference when Paris was being devastated in 1129 by a terrible fever, known as the *feu sacré* or *feu des ardents*, which spared neither age nor sex, and is supposed to have been a kind of erysipelas. The usual remedies were tried in vain, and at last the Bishop of Paris ordered the shrine of St. Geneviève to be carried in solemn procession through the streets. The result is said to have been immediate: all the sufferers who touched the shrine, or even saw it pass, were healed at once, and in memory of the miracle the name of the Church of St. Geneviève la Petite, built on the site of the wonder-worker's old home was changed to St. Geneviève des Ardents. The building was, unfortunately, pulled down in 1749 to make way for the Foundling Hospital, but until recently it was still customary in times of calamity to carry round Paris

a richly-decorated shrine, the property of the Abbey of St. Geneviève, said to contain a few relics of the Saint which had been rescued when the rest of her remains were burnt.

Scenes from the life and legend of St. Geneviève are of frequent occurrence in French churches, notably in St. Germain l'Auxerrois and St. Jacques du Haut Pas, both in Paris, and Lebrun, Vanloo, Watteau, and other French masters, have made incidents of her career the subjects of paintings. It was, however, reserved to Puvis de Chavannes, who died a few years ago, to interpret with anything like success the character of the simple-hearted maiden, who, even when the incredible is eliminated from her story, remains a type of all that is best in womanhood. That St. Geneviève really lived and exercised a remarkable influence over her contemporaries there can be no doubt, and the fact that she should have been chosen to share with St. Denis the honour of being immortalized in the secularized Pantheon proves that faith in the Master she served is not yet extinct in the city she loved so well. The 'Childhood of Geneviève,' already described in connection with St. Germanus, the 'St. Geneviève bringing Provisions to Paris,' and, above all, the 'St. Geneviève watching over the sleeping City,' rank amongst the masterpieces of modern French painting, and are remarkable examples of the work of their author, whose nature in its simplicity and directness was to some extent akin to that of his heroine. The 'St. Geneviève encouraging the Parisians when Attila is supposed to be approaching,' by Delaunay, and the 'Pilgrimage to the Shrine of the Saint, with the Procession of her Relics through Paris,' by Maillot, also in the Pantheon, although there is something pleasing about them, are by no means so satisfactory as the grand compositions of De Chavannes, who in them touched his highest point of excellence.

The well of St. Geneviève, with the water of which she is said to have cured her mother's blindness, is still shown at Nanterre, and near to the supposed site of her cottage, in the same village, is a cave now used as a wine-cellar, where she used, according to tradition, to retire for prayer. For many centuries it was customary for the people of Paris to go in procession on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross to an enclosure known as the Clos, or pasturage, of St. Geneviève, on Mont Valerian, to worship at a calvary, and drink of a

spring beside it, to which their beloved patroness used, it is said, sometimes to lead her flock, whether of sheep or converts the legend does not specify, for meditation and prayer. The water of the spring was supposed to have miraculous power, but it is now dried up.

Very different from that of St. Geneviève was the life of her great contemporary and friend, the proud and haughty Queen Clotilda, who is greatly reverenced in France on account of the conversion of her husband to Christianity and her princely generosity to the poor. The daughter of Chilperic, the younger brother of the fierce Gondebald, ruler of Burgundy, she with one of her sisters, was spared when the rest of her family were put to death by her uncle's orders. She was brought up at the Court of the murderer, and was converted to Christianity as a child, by whom is not known. When she was about eighteen she was married to Clovis, King of the Franks, who, though still a heathen, promised not to interfere with her in her religious duties. The great desire of her heart seems to have been to convert her husband, whom she truly loved; but he remained obdurate for many years, and it was only with difficulty that she got permission from him to have their children baptized. The most generally accepted account of the actual conversion is that on the eve of a great battle with the Huns Clovis promised his wife to become a Christian if he were victorious. At the beginning of the struggle he seemed likely to be defeated, but he called upon the name of Christ, and immediately the tide turned in his favour. When the enemy had been put to flight, the victorious monarch sent for his wife, and expressed his willingness to be baptized. St. Remigius, Bishop of Rheims, was summoned, and in the presence of his whole army the King received the holy Sacrament of Baptism. To this nucleus of historical fact tradition has added the poetic detail that a cruse of oil was brought to the officiating Bishop by a dove, the emblem of the Holy Spirit, who was henceforth to be the guide of the new convert. Moreover, St. Clotilda related a marvellous dream she had had on the eve of the battle, when an angel appeared to her bearing a shield, on which three lilies were engraved, and intimated that these lilies were henceforth to be substituted for the three toads of the arms of King Clovis. The alteration was made, and this is said by some to have been the origin of the famous

national emblem of the fleurs-de-lys, a tradition embodied by Pierre de Ronsard in the lines :

‘ Son écusson déshonoré de trois
Crapauts bouffis, pour sa vielle peinture,
Prendra des lys à la blanche ceinture.’

Certain German writers, however, trace the origin of the three toads to the name of Clotilda, which they spell Kroete-schild, thus making it signify toad-shield, asserting further that the three toads were gradually transformed into lilies. As a matter of fact, the fleurs-de-lys were not adopted in France until the fifteenth century, and they were at first powdered all over the national banner, the reduction to three not taking place until considerably later.

King Clovis only lived five years after his conversion, but his widow still continued to exercise great influence over the kingdom, which was divided between her three sons, Clodomir, Childebert and Clotaire. She founded many monasteries, including the celebrated one at Les Grands Andelys, and was unwearying in her work for the poor and suffering. Unfortunately the latter part of her life was stained by a great crime, for she sanctioned the murder of her grandsons, two of whom were slain by their uncles, because they interfered with their own ambitious projects. It is said that the Queen-mother was asked by one of the would-be assassins whether she would prefer that the boys should die or be shut up in a monastery, and she replied at once, ‘ Better they were dead than shaven monks.’ She was taken at her word, two of the young princes were stabbed, but the third escaped, and later became famous as St. Cloud, one of the first followers of St. Benedict.

Filled with remorse at what she had done, though it is possible that she could not have prevented the cruel deed if she had tried, Queen Clotilda withdrew to Tours, where she spent the rest of her life in strict seclusion, praying much at the tomb of St. Martin. When she was dying she sent for her two surviving sons, Childebert and Clotaire, and besought them to repent of their evil deeds and to seek rather to prepare for heaven than to win victories on earth. Her body was taken to Paris and there interred with much pomp and ceremony, not beside King Clovis, but at the feet of St. Geneviève.

St. Clotilda is constantly introduced in French pictures,

illuminated missals, and breviaries, wearing her royal robes and with a crown upon her head, a long white veil alone suggesting her saintly life. Sometimes she kneels in prayer at an altar or a tomb, or she stands holding a church in her hand, gazing up to heaven in rapt devotion. Now and then she is attended by an angel bearing a shield with the device of the three fleurs-de-lys, or she is causing a spring of water to gush out of the ground, in allusion to a legend to the effect that when her monastery at Les Grands Andelys was being built, she procured a miraculous supply of water for her workmen, or, according to another version, converted the water of a neighbouring well into wine for their use. In the so-called Bedford Missal, presented to Henry VI. on his coronation as King of France in 1431, the legend of the shield is represented in a beautiful miniature, an angel presenting the lilies first to St. Remigius, who gives them to St. Clotilda, whilst below the Queen offers the emblazoned shield to her newly-converted husband.

With the story of Queen Clotilda of France is bound up that of her cousin St. Sigismund of Burgundy, the son of King Gondubald, who had murdered her father. When Sigismund ascended the throne he was converted to Christianity, but this did not save him from committing the terrible crime of murdering his eldest son, whom he suspected of designs upon his life. This wicked deed he expiated with such severe penance, that he was accounted a Saint by his people, and it is related that he prayed earnestly to be punished in this life, so that he might escape the due reward for his crime in the next. His prayer was granted, for the sons of Queen Clotilda invaded his kingdom, took him prisoner, and avenged their grandfather's death by killing their captive. His body was thrown into a well, and later taken to the Abbey of St. Maurice, where it has ever since been greatly revered. The association of St. Sigismund with this abbey, sacred to the memory of the leader of the renowned Theban legion, has led to the cult of the royal Saint in Italy, and he appears in many fine devotional pictures by Italian masters, notably in the Altar-piece by Giulio Campi in the Church of St. Sigismund, outside Cremona. As a rule St. Sigismund wears his royal robes, and holds a church in his hand, the latter on account of a tradition that he was the real founder of the abbey in which he is interred. In Switzerland

he is often grouped with Saints Philip and James the Less, probably because the first of May is the fête-day of all three.

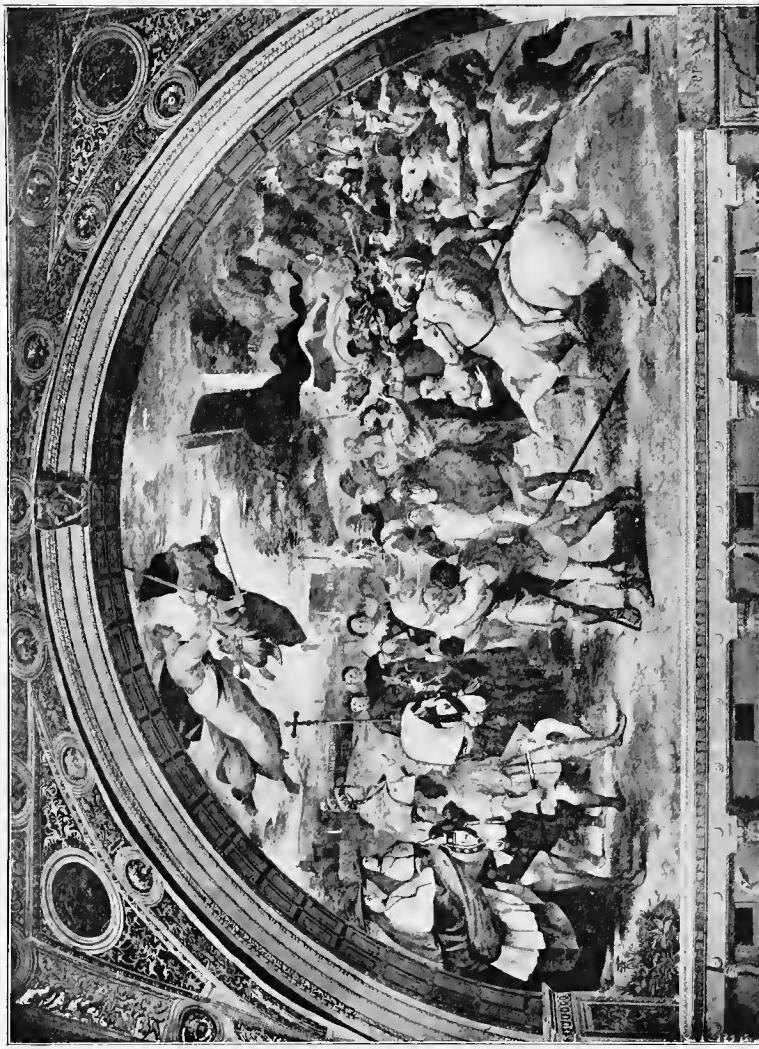
A humble contemporary of Saints Geneviève, Clotilda, and Sigismund, was St. Menéhould of Perthes, who deserves a passing mention amongst the holy women of her time, on account of the quaint story told of her having stayed a flood by planting her spindle in the ground. Who she was or where she came from is unknown, but she is said to have been stopping with her father at Chateau sur Aisne, now called St. Menéhould in her honour, when a great inundation threatened to sweep the whole village away. The people were flying from their houses, carrying all they could with them, when the strange maiden saved them by her extraordinary action. In the church of Lanneville is a picture representing the miracle taking place in the presence of crowds of people, and in that of Bienville, where the wonder-worker is said to have been buried, some scenes from her life are given in the stained-glass windows. St. Menéhould is the patron Saint of lantern-makers, it is suggested because the manufacture of lanterns was a speciality of the district in which she lived, and Père Cahier, in his 'Caractéristiques des Saints,' reproduces a quaint medal, bearing what he thinks may be her effigy on one side and a lantern on the other.

CHAPTER XXIII

SOME GREAT CHURCHMEN OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

Two Popes who in the fifth century did much to consolidate the power of the See of Rome and to pave the way for the work of St. Gregory the Great, were Saints Sixtus III. and Leo I. The former, who was elected Pope in 432, and died in 440, is chiefly remembered for the work he did in connection with S. Maria Maggiore, Rome, on which account he is sometimes represented holding an image of the Blessed Virgin in his hand, or, more rarely, a pickaxe, in allusion to his personal superintendence of the workmen engaged in the building of the great basilica.

Leo I., surnamed the Great, who succeeded Sixtus III., and



Anderson photo]

ATTILA REBUKED BY ST. LEO THE GREAT

By Raphael

[Vatican, Rome]



during whose Pontificate the Western Empire was established, exercised a most important influence over the history of his time. It was thanks to his intervention that Rome was saved from being taken by Attila; and, later, he saved the city from absolute destruction when it had fallen into the hands of Genseric after the defeat of Maximus. The friend and counsellor of St. Pulcheria and her consort Marcian, Leo the Great was mainly instrumental in bringing about the wise decisions of the Council of Chalcedon, and throughout the twenty-one years of his reign his influence was ever in favour of moderation, whether in dealing with heretics or with the declared enemies of the Church.

One of the patron Saints of Rome, St. Leo the Great is much honoured in that city, and the incident of his interview with Attila, at which Saints Peter and Paul are said to have been present, has been the subject of several celebrated representations, of which the finest is the fresco in the Stanza d'Eliodoro of the Vatican, one of a series of subjects by Raphael, in which the decorative art of the Golden Age of painting reached its highest culmination. The Camera della Segnatura, of which the Stanza d'Eliodoro is the second in order of production, ranks with the Sistine chapel as one of the greatest triumphs of decorative skill ever produced; and the 'Discomfiture of Attila' is as remarkable for the dramatic force of its conception as are the 'Miracle of Bolsena' and the 'Expulsion of Heliodorus.' Mounted on a black horse, the heathen leader occupies the centre of the composition, whilst two of his soldiers are pointing out to him the dignified figure of St. Leo approaching to accost him, and in the background a crowd of soldiers are issuing from a mountain-pass. Above the Pope and his long train of attendants, appear Saints Peter and Paul, supposed to be visible only to Attila, whose face expresses the greatest awe and astonishment.

The same subject has been far less satisfactorily treated by Alessandro Algardi in the colossal bas-relief in St. Peter's, Rome, in which the leader of the Huns turns his back upon the warning apparition, and runs away in a very undignified manner. Elsewhere the actual interview between the two great men is given, the officers of Attila listening respectfully to the conversation; and occasionally two figures only appear, those of the Pope and the General, but where this is the case

it is possible that the artist intended to represent St. Leo with Genseric, not Attila.

A special distinction of the fifth century is the number of Bishops to whom the honour of canonization has been given, and who, though few of them have been made the subject of any great works of art, deserve at least a passing mention because they are introduced with more or less frequency amongst other Saints, and have, most of them, their distinctive attributes.

Taking them, as far as possible, in the order of the date of their birth, precedence must be given to St. Zenobio, of Florence, who was born, according to some, as early as 338, whilst others place that event as late as 407. The son of noble but heathen parents, Zenobio was by them brought up in their own belief, but he was converted when still a boy by one of his tutors. He is said to have been ordained priest as a young man, to have acted as secretary to Pope Damasus I., and to have been sent by him to Florence to try and heal the dissensions between the Arians and Catholics. In any case, he was in that city when the Bishop died, and was with one accord elected to succeed him. According to tradition, St. Zenobio's episcopate was marked by the occurrence of many miracles. Twice he raised the dead, restoring to life a little boy who had been run over by a chariot, and a young man who had died suddenly, the son of a lady from Gaul who had come to pray at the tombs of the Apostles. When Florence was besieged by the Goths, St. Zenobio, aided by St. Ambrose, who came to him from heaven, saved the city; and even after his death wonders were wrought by his remains, for when they were translated in the ninth century, a dead tree accidentally touched by the bier, suddenly put forth branches and leaves.

In a beautiful Pietà attributed to Giottino, now in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, Saints Benedict and Zenobio are blessing the donors of the picture, which was painted for the Church of S. Romeo; in Fra Angelico's 'Great Crucifixion,' so often referred to, St. Zenobio is in the group of Saints at the foot of the Cross; in the 'Coronation of the Virgin by two Angels,' by Filippo Lippi, in the Uffizi Gallery, he appears with St. John the Baptist; and he is constantly introduced in the devotional pictures of Ghirlandajo and other Italian masters, wearing his full episcopal robes and with the red

[Dresden Gallery

SCENES FROM THE LIFE OF ST. ZENOBO

By Sandro Botticelli

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lily which is one of the distinctive emblems of Florence, on his cope. In the Palazzo Vecchio, at Florence, there is a fine 'St. Zenobio Enthroned,' by Ghirlandajo; and the same subject has been well treated in an Altar-piece in the cathedral by Andrea Orcagna, who has introduced two favourite deacons of the Bishop, kneeling at his feet, and added scenes from his life on the predella.

The legend of St. Zenobio has inspired several beautiful compositions, notably the 'Restoration of the Child to Life,' and the 'Burial of the Saint,' by Ghirlandajo, both in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, which, though they have unfortunately suffered much from restoration, rank amongst the best works of that master. Massaccio has also given a very graphic rendering of the Miracle of the Child, in which the mother kneels opposite to the Bishop, who is praying earnestly, whilst the little boy stands by with clasped hands, as if awaiting the signal to resume his interrupted life. More celebrated, perhaps, than any of these are, however, the scattered panels by Sandro Botticelli, some of which are at Berlin and one at Dresden, whilst fine replicas are owned by Mr. Ludwig Mond, of London. The originals were probably painted for some Florentine church, and represent the Farewell of St. Zenobio to his Family, his Baptism, his Consecration by Pope Damasus, the Restoration of the Child, the Casting out of two devils, and the Death of the Bishop, who is blessing his kneeling clergy with his last breath.

In the Cathedral of Florence is a beautiful bronze sarcophagus, said by some to contain the whole body, by others the head only, of St. Zenobio, with designs in relief, by Lorenzo Ghiberti, representing three miracles: the Restoration of the child, that of the young man, and also that of a monk, who is supposed to have been a messenger sent to the Bishop by St. Ambrose, who died on the way. His companion stands looking sadly down at the body, and St. Zenobio is consoling him. On the back of the sarcophagus six angels uphold a laurel wreath, with a scroll bearing an inscription in praise of the Saint.

A French contemporary of St. Zenobio was St. Hilary of Arles, chiefly celebrated for his long conflict with Leo the Great, who was born in 401, and is said to have been chosen to succeed St. Honoratus at a very early age, a dove

having appeared hovering above him when the dignitaries of the Church were assembled to choose a Bishop. For this reason St. Hilary is represented with a dove resting on his head, and occasionally he also holds a staff, about which a serpent is entwined, but this emblem is given to him in error, the result of the confusion which has arisen between him and St. Hilary of Poitiers noticed above.*

In the north of France and in Jersey St. Magloire, Bishop of Dol for many years, is greatly venerated. He is said to have retired at the age of seventy to Jersey, where he founded an important monastery, and he appears sometimes amongst other bishops holding a pilgrim's staff, in memory of what was in his day considered a very long journey. He is also represented kneeling to receive the Holy Communion from an angel, and some artists have gone so far as to represent him administering the holy elements to his celestial visitor, in allusion to a tradition that he was so holy that the very messengers of God did homage to him.

Another Bishop whose exploits are more or less apocryphal was St. Exuperis of Toulouse, whose emblem is a holy water sprinkler, because it is said that when the city under his care was besieged by the Goths, he stood on the ramparts sprinkling holy water over the enemy, every drop which fell killing one of them. In the Oratory at Blague there is a very graphic rendering of this incident, for a soldier touched by the holy water is rolling down a scaling ladder, whilst crowds are looking on at his death.

With St. Exuperis may be ranked St. Maximus of Riez, who is said to have hid himself in a wood when the people of that city clamoured for his election, and when he had been forcibly dragged to the cathedral justified their choice by the wonders he wrought. Amongst other miracles, he was able to secure with a word the removal, for the building of a church, of huge masses of stone, that had resisted the efforts of the strongest oxen, for which reason his attribute is a church held in the right hand.

Better authenticated is the legend of St. Marcellus, Bishop of Paris in the early part of the fifth century, who is sometimes represented interceding for captives, in allusion to his pleading with the barbarian invaders for mercy on his flock, or, as on

* See *ante*, pp. 190, 191.



Alinari photo

ST. ZENOBIOS ENTHRONED

By Domenico Ghirlandajo

[*Palazzo Vecchio, Florence*]

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one of the portals of the west front of Notre Dame, dragging along a dragon with his stole, in memory it is said, of his having driven away an evil beast which had taken up its abode on the tomb of a young girl who had died impenitent, but whose soul had been rescued from purgatory by the prayers of the faithful.

There is also probably some foundation of fact in the story of St. Maurillus of Angers, who is one of the Bishops represented holding a fish, from whose mouth a key is issuing, in allusion to a quaint legend to the effect that, having neglected to baptize or confirm a boy in his diocese before his death, he flung the keys of his cathedral into a river in a fit of remorse. After this St. Maurillus refused any longer to exercise his rights or perform his duties as Bishop until one day some fishermen brought him back the keys, which they had found in the body of a fish they had caught. St. Maurillus accepted this as a message from God authorizing him to resume his work. Moreover, he was enabled to restore to life the unbaptized child, who after being duly received into the Church, grew up a holy man and became Bishop after the death of St. Maurillus. Occasionally St. Maurillus is represented in the dress of a gardener instead of the robes of a Bishop, according to some because the messengers sent to fetch him to the cathedral found him at work in a garden, whilst others see in his costume an allusion to the rich spiritual harvest gathered in by him during his episcopate. A dove is now and then also introduced above his head, for the Divine will is said to have been revealed in his case, as in that of so many others, by a dove singling him out from amongst other candidates.

One of the very few martyred Churchmen of the fifth century was St. Nicasius of Rheims, who, when his city was besieged by the barbarians, went forth with his sister St. Eutropia at the head of his clergy to ask for an interview with their leader, but was attacked, before his request could be granted, by a soldier, who cut off the upper part of his head. St. Eutropia, who feared a worse fate than death, is said to have given one of the soldiers standing by a box on the ear, thus ensuring her own murder; an incident graphically rendered in some sculptures of the Cathedral of Rheims. St. Nicasius is sometimes represented, as in a painting by Jan Schorel in the Munich Gallery, carrying his own head, for, according to

tradition, he returned to the cathedral after his assassination with his skull in his hand, and only fell down lifeless when he reached the altar. He and St. Eutropia were buried together in the church named after the latter, but their remains were later translated to the cathedral.

Two celebrated Bishops of Orleans who lived in the fifth century were Saints Euvertius and Aignan, to the former the dove is given as attribute for the same reason as to St. Hilary of Arles and the Columbini, and the latter was the disciple of St. Euvertius, who chose him as his successor before his death. The two are often represented together, the dying Bishop presenting his pastoral staff to his pupil. St. Aignan is also sometimes introduced praying for his people on the ramparts of a besieged town, for it is related that when all hope of rescue seemed gone, it was revealed to him from heaven that a Roman army was at hand.

St. Aubin of Angers is another Bishop who appears sometimes in French ecclesiastical decoration, and is chiefly remembered for his skill in curing the sick and suffering, especially the blind. It is related of St. Aubin that one day when he passed a prison, and the captives within called to him for aid, his earnest prayers opened the doors of their dungeon, for which reason chains are one of the attributes given to him. Sometimes the holy Bishop is represented seated in a pulpit, with his disciples around him, for he is said to have been never weary of teaching them, and occasionally, though the reason is obscure, his robes are replaced by armour, or a suit of mail is introduced at his feet, some say in token of the conflict he waged with evil.

St. Remigius of Rheims, specially celebrated in the history of the early church of Gaul, on account of his having baptized King Clovis of Paris, may be distinguished amongst other Bishops by the phial of oil he generally holds in his hand. As is well known, it was customary, in the case of the baptism of adults, for that rite to be immediately succeeded by confirmation, and it has been claimed by certain French authors that the chrism required for the second ceremony was miraculously supplied to St. Remigius, whilst others relate a similar incident in connection with the confirmation of a less important convert than the King. The dove which is associated with St. Remigius is not, as is generally the case, the symbol of the interference of

God at his election as Bishop, but typifies the reconciliation to the Church of the heathen monarch, for, according to a touching legend, a dove was sent from heaven to announce to the Saint the approaching happy cessation of the floods of barbarism, which were to be whelmed back by the all-powerful influence of the new religion.

In addition to the emblems of the phial and the dove, chains are also sometimes associated with St. Remigius, in allusion to his successful pleading with King Clovis, on behalf of the prisoners taken before that ruler's conversion. The most frequently rendered scene of the life of the great Bishop is the Baptism of Clovis, which is the subject of a fine modern group of sculpture in the Pantheon, Paris, and of one on the tomb of St. Remigius in St. Remi, Rheims, which church also owns some quaint sixteenth-century tapestries representing other incidents of his career. Though generally represented alone, St. Remigius is sometimes grouped with his mother, St. Céline, and his nurse, St. Balsamie, who are both honoured in France, though very little is known about them.

St. Germanus of Paris, who is even more beloved in his native country than St. Remigius, is said to have received in a dream a key from St. Peter, who told him that he would one day save the capital of France, a prophecy fulfilled three years afterwards, when the Bishop successfully intervened in the disputes between the successors of Clovis. For this reason a key is the chief attribute of St. Germanus, but he also sometimes holds an image of the Blessed Virgin—because he is said to have had one always with him—or a chain, the latter in token of his having often pleaded the cause of captives. It is related that after his death it was impossible to lift his bier until some prisoners were sent for, who carried it to its final resting-place.

Of St. Melanius of Rennes, and St. Sidonis Apollinares of Clermont also, wonderful things are told in the dioceses over which they ruled. The former cast out devils by giving a box on the ear to those tormented by them, and after his death, which took place away from home, the boat bearing his remains to Rennes, made its own way thither without rudder, sails, or oars, two incidents sometimes represented by French artists. St. Sidonis, who had achieved nothing very remarkable in his life, is celebrated for having caused the sudden death of an unworthy priest who aspired to be his successor,

just as the latter was sitting down to table after washing his hands; a gruesome interference from beyond the grave, which is occasionally introduced in French mural paintings.

Three celebrated Italian Bishops of the same century were Saints Peter Chrysologus of Ravenna, Epiphany of Pavia, and Petronius of Bologna, with whom may be classed the humble deacon, St. Marinus of Rimini. The first-named, who is supposed to be able to save his votaries from madness and from fever, is said to have been chosen Bishop through the special intervention of Saints Peter and Apollinaris, who in some old pictures are seen appearing above the heads of the conclave of dignitaries. The two chief attributes of St. Peter Chrysologus, whose second name was given to him on account of his great eloquence, are a dog at his feet and a kind of paten held in his hand, the former in allusion to his having aided those bitten by mad dogs; the latter, according to some, in memory of the fact that the Empress Placidia had a plate of corn, on which the Saint had given her a loaf of barley bread, enshrined in silver. Others are, however, of opinion that it has reference to a certain plate preserved at Imola, the birthplace of the Saint, with the aid of which many marvellous cures have been effected, water which has been placed in it having restored the mad to sanity and the sick to health.

St. Epiphany of Pavia, who appears occasionally either alone or with other Saints, with prisoners in chains beside him, is said to have done much during his episcopate to aid the captives taken to France by the Burgundians after the war. Thousands were restored to their native land through the eloquent pleading of the good Bishop, who made many journeys between Pavia and the scene of their sufferings, healing the sick by the way, and winning the love and admiration even of those most bitter against his fellow-countrymen.

St. Petronius of Ravenna, whose chief characteristic is a little church, with the celebrated leaning Tower beside it, held in his right hand, was particularly active in rebuilding the places of worship destroyed by the barbarians in the years immediately preceding his election, and is much reverenced in Northern Italy for his earnest eloquence and his devotion to the poor.

St. Marinus, whose attributes in art are a bear at his feet

and a chisel in his hand, became greatly celebrated on account of the work he did for the Church. He was a native of Dalmatia, a stone-cutter by trade, and withdrew with a friend named Leo to a hill near by, where they built a little chapel with their own hands. St. Marinus came to Rimini to obtain employment when that town was being rebuilt after its destruction in the early part of the fifth century. It is related that many Christian slaves were employed in tasks beyond their strength, and that Saints Marinus and Leo set to work to help them, performing many prodigies on their behalf. When a donkey they had hired to carry the stones from the quarry was devoured by a bear, St. Marinus compelled the latter to do the work of its victim, and every day the huge creature might be seen meekly dragging a laden cart through the city. The Bishop of Rimini, struck by the wonder-working power of St. Marinus, insisted on ordaining him deacon, but, in spite of his new dignity he continued to practise his trade till he died, in a cave near his chapel, which is still shown, and known as the Pœnitentia Sancti Marini.

CHAPTER XXIV

HERMITS AND OTHER RECLUSES OF THE FIFTH CENTURY

OF the many saintly men who in the fifth century withdrew to serve God in the desert alone, or in the company of other monks, none was more beloved in his day than St. Gerasimus, whose emblem in art is a lion, and of whom a legend is told resembling that of St. Jerome. After living for many years in the desert of Thebes, St. Gerasimus passed over to Syria, where he was elected Abbot of a monastery on the Jordan. In spite of his position as head of the community, he delighted in performing the humblest tasks for the brethren, and he used to go down daily to the river with a donkey to fetch water. One day, as the two were plodding along together, the donkey began to tremble and refused to move. St. Gerasimus, puzzled at this behaviour, tried to lead the animal further in vain. Presently a lion came out of the bush hard by, and, limping up to St. Gerasimus, who showed no signs of fear, held up a paw

pierced with a large thorn. St. Gerasimus took the thorn out, the lion submitting very quietly, and when the operation was over he licked the hands of his doctor with every sign of affection. After this the lion refused to leave the Saint, and although at first the monks were afraid of him, they soon saw that he meant to do them no harm. He used to sleep outside the cell of St. Gerasimus, and go down with him and the donkey to the river every day. All went well until on one occasion the Abbot was called away, and the two animals were left to perform their task alone. The donkey went down to the river, but the lion fell asleep by the way, and the donkey was stolen by some wicked men, who found it waiting by the water. When the lion woke, he went back alone to the monastery, and the monks, not unnaturally, thought he had killed and eaten his companion. They wanted to drive the lion away, but St. Gerasimus refused to allow them to do so, and only punished him by making him henceforth do the donkey's work. In the end the donkey was recovered, for one day the merchants who had stolen it passed the Abbot and his lion as they were going to the river. The lion dashed in amongst the animals, seized his old friend by the bridle, and dragged him to St. Gerasimus, who recognised him at once. The merchants, full of terror at the strange occurrence, confessed their crime and were forgiven. The lion was restored to full favour at the monastery, and lived there until the death of St. Gerasimus, when he refused to take food, and died stretched out upon the grave of his beloved master.

St. John the Silent, who is occasionally represented with his finger on his lips, a constellation of the form of a cross above his head, and a lion beside him, was another Abbot who cared not at all for the dignity of his position, and, after ruling a monastery for some little time, withdrew to another under the care of St. Sabas, led thither by a cross in the sky in reply to a prayer for guidance. He confided his rank to no one but the Abbot, and for twenty years served the brethren in a menial capacity without speaking a word. The lion associated with him, as with so many other hermits, is variously explained, some asserting that he was protected by one when his monastery was attacked by Saracens ; others, that he rescued his fellow-monks from the onslaught of a lion, which lay down at his feet in obedience to a mere gesture of command.

St. Gildas the Wise, who is distinguished in art by a bell in his hand or beside him, and by water gushing up at his feet, was a celebrated Abbot of Brittany, who is said to have crossed the Channel with no other vessel than his own cloak, and to have made great friends with St. Bridget of Ireland, at whose request for some memento of his visit he presented her with a bell. It is also related of St. Gildas that he obtained water for his monks by merely striking the ground with his staff, and that he was able with his wise words of counsel to heal all who came to him, whether in mental or bodily distress.

St. Sabas, to whom St. John the Silent was miraculously led, was one of the most celebrated Patriarchs of the monks of the Holy Land, and is sometimes represented in art conversing with the Emperor Justinian, who constantly sought his advice. He is also sometimes seen standing alone, holding an apple in his hand, in memory of his having stolen one as a boy, in remorse for which crime he never again touched fruit; or praying in a cave, with a lion beside him. St. Sabas resolved to dedicate his life to God when he was still a child, and when a young man he withdrew to a lonely cave in Palestine, which, it is said, was already occupied by a lion. The animal showed no resentment at the intrusion, but when St. Sabas fell asleep tried to drag him out of the cave by his clothes. The holy man, aroused by this arbitrary proceeding, remonstrated with the words, 'It is not fitting that thou shouldst turn out one made in the image of God,' at which the lion desisted, and henceforth the two dwelt together in amity. In course of time the holiness of St. Sabas attracted many to his retreat, and, in spite of his own reluctance, he was compelled to take charge first of one, and then another, community of monks. He died at the age of ninety-four, having done much for the cause of religion through his influence with the Emperor.

St. Theodosius, long Superior-General of the monasteries of Palestine, whose attributes in art are a purse, a coffin, an hour-glass, and some ears of wheat, began his religious life as a hermit, but, like St. Sabas, was compelled by pressure from the ecclesiastical authorities, to take an active share in the government of the many communities of monks, which were now scattered about the Holy Land. It is related that the Emperor Anastasius tried to bribe the holy man with thirty pieces of gold—hence the emblem of the purse—to act against the con-

victions of his conscience, but that St. Theodosius, ignoring the snare laid for him, gave all the money to the poor, and continued to oppose the Imperial donor as strenuously as ever. The ears of corn are in allusion to a miraculous multiplication of grain for the use of his monastery, through the prayers of the Saint; the coffin and the hour-glass to a tradition that on one occasion he had a coffin brought into the refectory when the brethren were assembled for a meal, and asked if any one of them would care to occupy it. A young monk came forward, stretched himself in the coffin, and peacefully expired—a gruesome incident which St. Theodosius made the text of a solemn discourse on the superiority of eternal life to that on earth. The famous monk is also said to have been the means of the winning of a great victory over the Persians by the Count of the East, to whom he gave his hair-cloth shirt, which, when waved in front of the enemy, drove them back in confusion.

Of the brothers Saints Romanus and Lupicienus, who are occasionally represented together, with a pile of pieces of money at their feet, or with a demon throwing stones at them, various quaint stories are told. As young men they retired to the desert, determined to serve God in seclusion for the rest of their lives; but, as they knelt together in prayer in their cave, the Evil One appeared to them and tried to kill them by rolling stones down upon them. They fled in terror, and a woman of whom they asked hospitality laughed at them, telling them they were easily daunted. They then returned to their retreat, and were not again molested. As usual in cases such as theirs, the fame of their holiness spread far and near, so that their little cell became the nucleus of several important monasteries, over which they ruled with justice and wisdom. When they were anxious how to feed their monks in a famine, an angel appeared to them, and led them to a secret storehouse of gold in a rock, hence the emblem of the pieces of money at their feet. Indeed, in every difficulty, supernatural aid was granted to them. St. Romanus died about 460, and his brother survived him for twenty years.

Another celebrated fifth-century recluse was St. Florent of Glonne, near Saumur, who is associated in art with a boat, a dragon, and a flower, the first because he is said to have crossed the Rhone in a leaky boat, with no crew but an angel at the helm;

the second on account of his having, it is supposed, drowned a venomous dragon in the same river ; and the third in allusion to his name. St. Florent is said to have been greatly attracted by the preaching of St. Martin of Tours, to whom he wished to attach himself as deacon, but the holy Bishop told him he could be more useful elsewhere, and sent him to preach the Gospel on the banks of the Loire, where he won many to Christ, and before his death, supposed to have taken place in 440, he founded an important monastery, of which, however, no trace now remains.

Of St. John Calybite, whose emblem in art is a hut, and who is sometimes represented asking alms as he stands at its entrance, a touching story is told. The only son of wealthy parents, he was born at Constantinople, and brought up to inherit his parents' riches. When he was about fifteen, a monk spent a few days in his home, and persuaded him that it was his duty to retire to the desert, whether he could win the consent of his father or not. St. John duly asked his parents to let him go with the holy man, but when they refused he ran away, and although they sought him unceasingly far and near, they knew him no more until just before his death. He was received in a monastery only six miles from his father's house, and it is related that he very soon became terribly home-sick, though every entreaty for permission to return to Constantinople was refused. At last he managed to elude the monks by changing clothes with a beggar, and went to live in a shed—hence his second name, *Καλύβη* being the Greek for hut—at the gates of his old home, so that he saw his father and mother every day as they went to and fro. They never suspected who he was, but daily sent him a portion of food from their own table. Presently, however, it was revealed to St. John that he was about to die, and he sent a message to his mother asking her to come and see him. She complied, and even then he did not tell her who he was, but before she left him he gave her the very Bible she had given to him when he was a child. When she got home she showed the book to her husband, saying, ‘Is it not like the one we gave to our poor boy?’ ‘I believe it is the very one,’ said the father, and together the parents hastened back to the hut, just in time to see their long-lost son die. With his last breath St. John owned the truth, and made his parents promise to bury him where he was.

They did so, and later erected a beautiful church to his memory above his tomb.

Very similar to the legend of St. John Calybite is that of St. Alexis of Rome, who is said to have deserted his bride on his wedding-day, and, after living as a hermit in the desert for many years, to have returned to the house of his parents, where he spent the rest of his life as a beggar beneath the staircase. He was recognised when his body was being prepared for burial, for a strip of paper was found round his neck on which his name was inscribed. St. Alexis is generally represented in the dress and with the gown and staff emblematical of a pilgrim. In the sixteenth-century Utrecht missal his whole story is told, and in a quaint Venetian engraving, reproduced by Père Cahier in his '*Caractéristiques des Saints*', the Pope, who was, it is related, miraculously summoned to the funeral, is seen finding the strip of paper with the name of Alexis upon it, whilst in the background the parents are expressing their astonishment with dramatic gestures.

Great as was the fame for sanctity won by the various recluses whose legends have been related, it has been to a considerable extent overshadowed by that of their remarkable contemporary, St. Simeon Stylites, or of the Pillar, whose attribute in art is a column, on which he is generally represented alone, but occasionally accompanied by an angel, who is ministering to his needs. The son of a poor shepherd of Syria, Simeon began life as his father's helper, but at the age of thirteen he was led through hearing the beatitudes read, to long to devote himself to serving God alone. He went to consult a hermit who dwelt in a cave near the pastures frequented by the flock under his charge, and asked the holy man how he could win all the promised blessings. He was told that only in solitude could he become good enough to receive the great reward of pleasing God, so he left his old father and the sheep to take care of themselves, whilst he sought his own salvation independently of them. After nine years spent in a remote monastery, where he outshone all the other monks by the fearful tortures he inflicted on himself, he withdrew to Telanessa, near Antioch, where he had a pillar made 72 feet high and 4 feet square at the top, on which he resolved to spend the rest of his life alone. There he remained for no less than

thirty years, preaching daily to the thousands who flocked from all parts to see him, but never indulging himself in any other intercourse with his fellow-creatures. On his death, in 459, he was buried at Antioch with great pomp, and many are the miracles said to have been wrought at his tomb.

The example set by St. Simeon Stylites was followed after his death by his pupil, St. Daniel of Maratha, who lived for thirty-three years on a pillar, four miles from Constantinople, and in the sixth century a German monk named Wulfailich attempted to live on a column near Treves, but he was discredited by the Bishops of the district and compelled to leave his exalted position. Since then the custom has died out in the Western Church, though in the Eastern pillar saints were venerated as late as the twelfth century.

CHAPTER XXV

SAINTS PATRICK AND BRIDGET OF IRELAND

THERE are few more romantic legends than those of Saints Patrick and Bridget, two Saints of the fifth century, whose memory is peculiarly dear to the Irish, though they are also greatly honoured in the rest of the British Isles as well as in France. Very little is really known of either of them, but there is absolutely no doubt that they lived and were both earnest workers in the cause of their Master, suffering much for the truth, and, although they did not work all the wonderful miracles with which they are credited, achieving many spiritual victories through their simple, child-like faith.

St. Patrick, who has been well characterized ‘as one of the rays and of the flames which the Sun of Righteousness, Jesus Christ, sent into the world,’ is supposed to have been born in a village on the site of the present Kilpatrick, of noble Roman parents, who were settled in Scotland. His father and grandfather were both in Holy Orders, and his mother is said to have been related to St. Martin of Tours. He belonged, therefore, to a Christian family, and had every possible advantage of education. When he was about sixteen, however, he was taken prisoner by pirates, and carried by them to Ireland,

where he was sold to a Chief or King named Milchu, for whom he worked for six years, in the humble capacity of a swineherd, suffering, no doubt, terribly from his uncongenial surroundings. According to tradition, the piece of land still known as Ballylpatrick, or 'the town of the hollow of Patrick,' in what is now the county of Armagh, was the scene of his humble occupation, and it was probably there that the future Apostle of Ireland resolved, if ever he obtained his liberty, to dedicate the rest of his life to the service of God. In his lonely hours, with no companions but his pigs, he was, he says in his own 'Confessions,' haunted by visions of children stretching out their little hands to him and crying to him for help, and he knew that these visions were sent to him by the Spirit of God. That Spirit he felt ever 'burning within him,' and one day, when he was on his knees listening for an answer to his prayers for guidance, it was revealed to him that the time had come for him to return home, to begin the work of evangelization in his own land. A vessel from Scotland was even then awaiting him, and without a moment's hesitation he started for the seashore, though it was many miles distant.

Arrived on the beach, St. Patrick found the ship, and addressed himself to the captain, telling him that he had come to take passage with him. To his surprise—for in his simplicity he thought the captain would be expecting him—he was roughly told to go about his business; the vessel was not for those who could not pay their passage. Disappointed, but still full of faith in the Spirit which had led him so far, Patrick turned away and knelt down on the beach to pray for further guidance. The captain watched him, and touched by his quiet submission to the repulse, or perhaps impelled by the same Spirit as that which had led the boy to him, he sent some sailors to tell him he might return. Patrick gladly availed himself of the permission, and was taken back to his native land. Unfortunately, there is a break in the narrative of the saint's career at this very interesting crisis. No one knows how long he remained with his parents, or what decided him eventually to return to Ireland, after an absence of no less than thirty-six years. Some say he went to Rome, and was appointed missionary Bishop of the land of his captivity by Pope Celestine; others, that he never reached the Eternal City, but spent the prime of his manhood in the

North of France, becoming the close friend and fellow-worker of St. Germanus of Auxerre.

However he may have spent the intervening years, it seems certain that St. Patrick was quite an old man when he at last began the work of the evangelization of Ireland, with which his name is inseparably connected. He is supposed to have touched first at the island off the coast of Leinster, still known as Inis Patrick, and thence to have gone northward to the country ruled over by his old master, Milchu, whom he would gladly have made the first-fruits of his mission. The rumour of the approach of a stranger with a large following reached the old Chief, who inquired of his Druids what the event might portend. He was told that the traveller was mightier than himself, and predestined to overcome him and his people. Hearing this, Milchu, who interpreted the prophecy literally, determined to anticipate his doom. Making a funeral-pyre of his household goods, he set fire to it, and plunging into the flames, was burnt to death, thus offering up, as he thought, a propitiatory sacrifice to the offended gods.

Disappointed in his hopes of winning Milchu to the true faith, St. Patrick now sought an audience with the Chief of all the chiefs, or the Over-King of Ireland, Leoghaire, or Leary, whose camp he reached on the eve of the great heathen festival known as the Feast of Tara, which that year happened to fall at the same time as the Christian Easter. Now, on that solemn night it was customary that every fire should be quenched throughout the length and breadth of Ireland, that the contrast might be the greater when, on the following morning, the mighty fire of Tara should illuminate the land. For the infringement of the law the penalty was instant death, and hitherto none had been known to escape. Knowing nothing of this custom, though if he had known it would probably have made no difference to him, St. Patrick ordered the kindling of the 'Paschal consecrated fire,' by which to keep vigil through the hours before the dawn of the Resurrection morning. When the heathen camp was wrapped in the deepest gloom, the flames of the Christians' pile shot up to heaven, illuminating the whole district. Leoghaire, aroused from his meditations, sent his wise men to inquire the meaning of the extraordinary phenomenon, and when they returned their account aroused him

to the greatest fury. ‘He who lit that fire,’ the chief magician said, ‘will vanquish all the Kings of Ireland, and his fire will burn till Domesday, unless it be immediately extinguished.’ ‘We will go and put it out at once,’ said Leoghaire, ‘and slay him who has dared to defy us thus.’

Then the Chief of chiefs, followed by all his mighty men of war, went to St. Patrick’s camp, and summoned him to come forth from his tent to answer for what he had done. The missionary, roused from his devotions, obeyed, and, greeting his visitor with the words, ‘Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we in the name of the Lord,’ quickly proceeded to turn the tables against him. Instead of putting the lighter of the fire to death, Leoghaire found himself compelled to listen patiently to a sermon from him, in the course of which St. Patrick is said to have plucked a shamrock and shown it to the heathen chief, as a symbol of the Triune God. This was, according to some, the original reason for the adoption of the shamrock as the national emblem of Ireland, though others dispute alike the incident and the supposed result. Whatever may have been the arguments used, however, Leoghaire was so impressed by the power of St. Patrick that he desisted from the idea of slaying him immediately, or even interfering with his fire. Indeed, the chief pretended to be converted, and ordered his people not to molest the strangers, determining to get rid of them by stratagem. When he had, or thought he had, lulled them into a sense of security, he laid an ambush for them, placing a number of armed men in a narrow pass through which they had to go; but, though the would-be assassins waited several days, no one appeared, and it afterwards turned out that the missionaries had assumed the form of deer, thus escaping the danger. The quaint legend adds the circumstantial detail that the deer were followed by a fawn bearing a kind of bundle on its back, but the fawn was really a boy named Benen, who was the constant attendant of St. Patrick. In memory of this remarkable escape, the Christian leader composed the beautiful old hymn known as the ‘Deer’s Cry,’ in which he pleaded to be preserved ‘against black laws of heathenry, spells of women, smiths, and wizards,’ etc.

St. Patrick is supposed to have lived to a very great age, and to have converted the whole of Ireland to Christianity, baptizing all the Kings, his journeys to and fro being everywhere

marked by miracles of healing, and miraculous escapes. Amongst other wonderful works, he is said to have banished all venomous reptiles from Ireland, which is probably merely a poetic way of expressing his victory over evil. He consecrated no less than 450 Bishops, ordained thousands of priests, and received the vows of countless monks and nuns. Amongst the last-named were the two daughters of the treacherous Leoghaire, named Ethne the Fair and Fedelm the Ruddy, who one day, when they went to the well to fetch water, found St. Patrick and his clergy there, all in their white robes, holding an open-air service. The story of the conversation between the innocent girls and the venerable missionary is full of poetry, and wonderfully significant of the simplicity with which the good tidings of the Gospel were often received in those early unsophisticated days. To the naive inquiry of one of the maidens, ‘Are ye of the elves or of the gods?’ St. Patrick answered, ‘It were better for you to believe in God than to inquire of our race,’ to which Ethne the Fair replied, ‘Who, then, is your God, and where is He? . . . Tell us about Him. . . . Is He ever-living? Is He beautiful?’ Then the missionary, filled with the Holy Spirit, told the innocent maidens all he knew of the ever-living and noble Redeemer, so touching their hearts that they asked to be received into the Church then and there. Almost immediately afterwards they died of pure joy, at which consummation, though St. Patrick rejoiced, the heathen were, not altogether unnaturally, considerably incensed.

St. Patrick is said to have set his heart on dying at Armagh, where he had founded one of the most important of the many churches built under his superintendence. ‘It is Armagh that I love—a dear thorpe, a dear hill, a fortress which my soul haunteth,’ he had said in his beautiful ‘Song of Armagh’; but his wish was not fulfilled, for he breathed his last in a shed given to him by his first convert, the chief Lechu, at the little village of Saul, the name of which means ‘barn,’ where he had begun his work in Ireland. He was buried with much pomp and ceremony at Down, in a church bearing his name, which was destroyed in the sixteenth century, when his remains were burnt.

One of the most noteworthy characteristics of St. Patrick in art is a cave or hole in the ground, from which flames are

issuing, and near to which he kneels in his Bishop's robes. This is in allusion to a tradition that for many years after the death of the Apostle of Ireland there existed on a little island of Lake Dearg, in western Ulster, a cave known as the Purgatory of St. Patrick, in which a fire was ever burning. Into this cave, which was entered through a disused well, it was customary for pilgrims to go, with a view to anticipating in this life the expiatory pangs of Purgatory, and from it many returned with all their evil tendencies burnt away. The island became in course of time dotted with the huts put up to shelter the pilgrims who came to perform this strange penance, and the story of the wonderful physical and spiritual cures effected by the influence of St. Patrick spread far and wide, inspiring the Spanish poet Calderon with the religious drama known as '*El Purgatorio de San Patricio.*' The Purgatory is alluded to in the old office which used to be recited in Ireland on March 17, the fête day of the Saint, and there are references to it in many fifteenth and sixteenth century breviaries. As late as the seventeenth century traces remained of the buildings erected near the cave, and the Abbot of a monastery on the Isle of Dearg was called the Prior of the Purgatory of St. Patrick. A painting by Giuseppe Passeri, a little-known master of the same period, represents an angel kneeling beside St. Patrick and holding a scroll on which is a quaint drawing of a well, the rim of which is encircled with flames.

As a rule, St. Patrick is represented holding his Bishop's crosier, round about the staff of which a serpent is twined, in memory of the tradition that he drove all venomous snakes out of Ireland. Occasionally he is actually surrounded by serpents, who are shrinking away from him in terror, and now and then a harp, one of the national emblems of Ireland, replaces the crosier, some say because of the fervour of the saint's intercession for his adopted country after his death, whilst others see in it merely an allusion to his friendship during life with the bards of Erin. On a medal, reproduced by Père Cahier in his '*Caractéristiques des Saints,*' King David holding his harp appears on one side, and St. Patrick on the other.

Now and then St. Patrick is represented kneeling at the feet of Pope Celestine, from whom he is receiving his decretals as missionary Bishop of Ireland, but a more favourite subject is the Baptism of a certain King, whose foot the Bishop is said

to have wounded by accidentally dropping the point of his crosier upon it. The neophyte took no notice of the wound, thinking its infliction was part of the Christian ceremony, and St. Patrick did not observe it, until he saw a stream of blood staining the ground.

Other incidents of the life and legend of St. Patrick, which are sometimes introduced in churches dedicated to him, are the Overturning of the Idol of the Sun, an image of gold to which it is said hundreds of children were daily offered up; the Giving of sight to a man who had been born blind; and the Restoration to life of a number of long-buried Christians, whom the Saint is said to have summoned to arise and bear witness to the truth of his doctrine.

Full as is the legend of St. Patrick of romantic beauty, it is equalled if not excelled by that of St. Bridget, who ranks with him and St. Columba, the Apostle of Scotland, as one of the most revered Saints of Ireland. The daughter of a great Irish chieftain named Dubtach and a beautiful slave, Bridget, or Bride, as she is sometimes called, was brought into the world under a cloud of disgrace, for her mother is said to have been driven out of the house of her lover and master by his legitimate wife, just before the birth of her little one. In spite of this unpropitious beginning, however, the future Saint was brought up as a Christian, and when she was about three or four years old she was received into her father's house. She was often, it is said, taken to hear St. Patrick preach, and on one occasion fell asleep during his sermon. Before she was fourteen she had resolved to dedicate her life to God, but her father opposed her and wished her to marry a wealthy suitor. To escape from what she considered a desecration, Bridget prayed to God to destroy the beauty that made her so attractive to men, and it is said that her petition was answered by the loss of one of her eyes. Some claim that she received the veil from the hands of St. Patrick himself, whilst others assign that honour to St. Mel, the nephew and disciple of the great Apostle of Ireland. Whoever was the officiating Bishop on the occasion, three very remarkable incidents are said to have occurred at St. Bridget's consecration : a column of fire descended upon her head as she knelt at the feet of the holy man, hence her name of the Fiery Dart ; when his hands had touched her, and the dedication to God was irrevocable, her sight was restored to her ; and

when she laid her hand upon the altar, which was of wood, it sent forth a living green shoot. This last miracle is, however, by some assigned to a later period, when certain aspersions had been cast on the reputation of the Saint, and her innocence was proved by the sprouting forth of a branch on the altar at which she knelt, praying God to vindicate her by some sign of His favour.

After her consecration St. Bridget withdrew with two or three companions, who had also taken the vows, to a grove of oaks on the site of the present Kildare, the name of which signifies the 'cell (or church) of the oak,' and the holy women had not been there long before the fame of their wonderful piety spread far and near. On one occasion, when a tame wolf belonging to the chief of the district had been shot by mistake by a peasant, St. Bridget saved the culprit from death by calling to her side a fierce white wolf, which after she had touched it became as meek as a lamb, followed her to the palace, and took the place of the lost pet. This was but one amongst many instances of the power of the saintly maiden over wild animals, and her home in the oak grove was soon sought by all in need of her intervention with the dumb creatures. The little community at Kildare quickly became the nucleus of a great community of virgins, who lived in separate cells, meeting for meals and prayer only, and looking up to St. Bridget as their head. The Abbess, though undoubtedly an excellent guide in all things connected with the spiritual life, seems to have been a very indifferent housekeeper, the result, perhaps, of the fact that, even when she was in her father's home, miracles had been performed to save her from the effects of her improvidence, for, when she had given all the milk and butter under her care to the poor, her stepmother always found the right quantity in the pans when she went to inspect the dairy. All through her life St. Bridget met with similar good luck, if luck it could be called. When a Bishop came to her settlement in the grove with a long train of attendant priests, and the larder in the big oak was bare, the Abbess merely milked the one cow owned by the community three times and all their wants were supplied. Again, when St. Bridget came in from an excursion wet through and sought in her cell for somewhere to hang her dripping cloak, a sunbeam, strong enough to sustain its weight, darted in at the slit serving as window, and on this sunbeam the

cloak remained until it was dry. Throughout her long and chequered career there was never any need for the favoured saint to take thought for the morrow; she was so hedged about with love, both human and Divine, that every need was supplied as soon as it arose.

As a matter of course, the fame of all these wonders spread far and near, and the 'Fiery Dart,' or, as she was sometimes called, the 'Mary of the Irish,' because a certain holy man who had seen the Blessed Virgin in a vision had hailed Bridget as her living image, soon rivalled even St. Patrick in the number and zeal of her followers. The white-cloaked sisters of the Order of St. Bridget were to be seen all over Ireland, and many were the churches and monasteries which were built through their initiative. The rule given to these holy women by their revered Abbess was, though extremely rigid so far as individual conduct was concerned, remarkably unconventional with regard to the relations of the nuns with the outside world. They sought to serve God rather by going out amongst the poor and suffering than by shutting themselves away from all human intercourse, and St. Bridget herself seems to have led quite an exciting life; driving about in her chariot and pair to preach in the open air, or to visit some royal convert. On one occasion she nearly lost her life through her naïve endeavour to do two things at once. The driver of her chariot was also the chaplain of her nunnery, and, St. Bridget having asked his advice in some spiritual difficulty, he forgot to guide his steeds as he answered her. The result was that one of them ran away, and the other slipped partly down a precipice, dragging the chariot after him. Nothing dismayed, the charioteer continued to hold forth and the nun to listen, never recognising their peril, till a rush to their rescue from some passers-by brought them face to face with the reality.

Before his death St. Patrick had asked that his shroud should be worked by St. Bridget, and it would seem as if the very spirit of the great Apostle had remained with her, for after her sacred task was completed her power over evil was greatly increased. Even the mad and distraught are said to have recognised her superiority at a glance, and as long as she was present their ravings would cease. Once a dangerous lunatic who had escaped from confinement dashed in amongst the white-cloaked nuns, who, led by St. Bridget, were proceeding

to some service. All except the Abbess fled at his approach, but she addressed the sufferer calmly, calling upon him to quote some words of his Master and her own. At once he became calm, and replied in a steady voice: 'O holy Bridget, I obey thee. Love God and all will love thee . . . fear God and all will fear thee.' The recovery was, however, only temporary, and the next moment the glimpse of reason was gone. The poor man fled away again as mad as ever, but the nuns never forgot the incident.

St. Bridget, like St. Patrick, is said to have lived to a great age, but nothing certain is known of the date or manner of her death. She is supposed, however, to have drawn her last breath in her convent at Kildare, surrounded by her sister nuns, and a fire was kept burning there in her honour until it was quenched in 1220 by order of the Bishop of the diocese. Later, St. Bridget's fire was re-kindled for a time, but at the Reformation its continuance was again forbidden. No human veto could, however, quench the fire of love for the maiden saint, which still glows in the hearts of her votaries. More churches have been built in her honour, more children have been named after her, than after any other Irish saint, and her memory is preserved in many a village remote from the scene of her earthly pilgrimage. Kilbrides are nearly as numerous in Scotland as in Ireland; Kirkbride, Bridekirk, and Brigham in Cumberland, with Bridstow and Bridge-Rule in Devonshire, are all memorials of her, and the church of St. Bride's, in Fleet Street, as well as the prison of Bridewell, prove that even in the time of Wren she was still held in honour in Protestant London.

St. Bridget is generally represented wearing the picturesque dress of her order, with the long white cloak and hood forming a becoming framework to the face. She holds a large bowl in her hands, and a cow is introduced beside her in memory of the miraculous supply of milk and butter, alluded to above, on account of which she is supposed to be the special patron of cows, especially in certain districts of Belgium, where the peasants bring rings and other small articles to be blessed by the priest on her fête day, February 1, in the belief that their sick cattle will be healed by being touched with them. Sometimes St. Bridget holds a crosier as Abbess, sometimes a green branch, the latter in allusion to the miracle of the altar. More

rarely a column of fire is seen above her head, or it is introduced over the cell in which she is praying. Instances also occur of a goose being placed beside her, the reason for which is obscure, but it has been suggested that it is because that bird is the type of the end as well as the beginning of winter, and in the South spring begins about February 1, the fête day of the saint.

CHAPTER XXVI

SAINTS BENEDICT, SCHOLASTICA, MAURUS, AND PLACIDUS

FIRST in order of date and, to a certain extent, first also in importance of the great Monastic Orders which were later to exercise so wide an influence, not only over the history of the Church but also over that of civilization and of art, was the Benedictine, named after its founder, St. Benedict, a young Italian of noble birth, who was born at Nursia, near Spoleto, in 480 A.D.

Sent from a refined and secluded home, where his only companion had been his twin sister, Scholastica, to a public school in Rome, the young Benedict found himself surrounded by careless and, in some cases, profligate companions, whose laxity of manners and of principle shocked him at every turn. He had not been long in the capital before he resolved to run away and emulate the example of the holy hermits, of whose self-denying lives he had been told at his mother's knee. The only person he took into his confidence in this important resolve was his old nurse, Cyrilla, who seems to have been sent to Rome to look after him. She, too, had doubtless been shocked by the behaviour of the fellow scholars of her beloved nursling, and agreed to assist him in his escape. Together the two crept out of the city at night, and made their way on foot to the little town of Affile, where they were kindly welcomed by certain holy men, who gave them the use of a little house beside the church. Here they dwelt happily together for some time, and here was wrought the first of the many miracles with which the name of St. Benedict is associated. Cyrilla broke an earthenware sieve, which was one of her household treasures, and the future saint mended it successfully by making over it the sign of the cross.

As was but natural, the quiet untroubled life in the little house soon palled upon the boy, eager for a real battle in the cause of the Master to whom he meant to devote his life. To be waited on at every turn by his nurse, and perhaps to be presently taken back by her to his parents, was not at all what the young ascetic had aimed at in his flight from Rome. He, therefore, resolved to slip away from his friends at Affile, and one morning, when Cyrilла summoned him as usual to the morning meal, he was nowhere to be found. Though she sought him far and near, she did not discover his retreat, and for three whole years he remained hidden in a cave still shown as *Il sacro Speco*, or the Holy Grotto, in the then deserted district of Sublaqueum, from which the modern town of Subiaco takes its name, near to which rise up two of the twelve monasteries later founded by St. Benedict, the church of one of them still retaining some faded frescoes illustrative of the life of the founder. During the time of lonely prayer and vigil in his cave St. Benedict was seen by no one except a fellow hermit called Romano, who lived in a hill a little above his retreat, and is said to have daily given him a portion of his own food, conveying it to him through a hole in the roof of the cave by a rope, to which a bell was attached.

As a matter of course, the temptations with which the young recluse was assailed in the three years of preparation for the great work of his life were many and terrible. He himself has told how sometimes the longing for home and love, above all for the love of wife and child, became almost unbearable, and to distract his thoughts from the happy visions of a fireside of his own, which continually haunted him, he used to roll himself naked amongst the brambles near his cave. The monks of Subiaco still show a rose-bush with specially vicious-looking thorns that they assert is a lineal descendant of one of those which were the instruments of their founder's self-discipline and some of the holy fathers, gifted with keen, imaginative vision, are able to make out on each leaf the impress of a tiny black serpent, the indelible memorial of the victory over the Evil One.

At the end of the three years of lonely struggle with his own self-will, St. Benedict, who was now a man, with a man's strength of purpose, felt that he had won the light and peace he sought. He was no longer distracted with doubts as to his



Alinari photo

[Vatican, Rome

ST. BENEDICT

By Perugino

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duty, for that duty lay clearly before him. He had to found what he called 'A School of Service to his Lord,' which should have none of the faults of the institution to which he had himself been sent in Rome, but should lead its scholars heavenwards. He had made straight paths for his own feet from which he never again turned aside; it was now time to teach others to walk in those paths. He began his ministrations by teaching the poor shepherds of the hills who came to him for physical or spiritual help, bringing their sick to be healed, and vying with each other in their eagerness to supply the needs of the recluse. The fame of the wonders wrought by St. Benedict soon spread through the whole district, and presently he received an urgent invitation to become their head, from a community of hermits in the neighbourhood. St. Benedict at first refused, but, on being eagerly pressed to reconsider his decision, he agreed to go to the monastery for a time, hoping to be able to reform the abuses he knew prevailed in it. The hermits, who had merely hoped that the residence of the saint amongst them might redound to their credit, soon found themselves in the position of the frogs who had clamoured for a king. Their new chief began by laying down a code of rules so strict that an open rebellion at once broke out. Instead of bringing to the community a fresh access of honour and glory, the Abbot wished to enforce literally the vows of poverty and seclusion, and the monks, after trying in vain to bring him to their way of thinking, resolved to poison him in a cup of wine. Pretending that they had brought him a draught of specially good vintage, the wicked men presented the cup to him, and St. Benedict, who had guessed their evil design, received it with a smile. Before raising it to his lips, however, he blessed it, making over it the sign of the cross. At this, the cup broke in his hands, and its contents were spilled on the ground at his feet. Looking sternly at his would-be murderers, who stood trembling before him, the Saint told them that it was evident he was not the Abbot they needed, and without another word he left the monastery, returning for a time to his old cave.

The fame of the miracle of the cup had, however, preceded him, and very soon the once lonely shores of the lake were dotted with the tents of those who came to join the wonder-worker. Parents from far and near brought their sons to him,

begging him to superintend their education, and in the course of a few years no less than twelve monasteries—or, rather, religious colleges—were founded by St. Benedict, in each of which he placed twelve pupils under a Superior, to whom he gave the rule for the guidance of his ‘Schools of Service to the Lord,’ still, with certain later modifications, that of the now wide-spread Benedictine Order.

When his twelve monasteries at Subiaco were in full working order, St. Benedict felt that he might be of greater use elsewhere, and resolved to fix his headquarters on Monte Cassino, near Naples, where the heathen god Apollo was still worshipped, and many unholy rites, especially revolting to Christians, were practised by his votaries. Very soon priests and worshippers were alike converted by the eloquent preaching of St. Benedict, who actually succeeded in inducing them of their own free will to pull down the temple, break the idol, and burn the consecrated grove, thus achieving a truly remarkable moral victory. The ground once cleared for action, the reformer next built two chapels, one dedicated to St. John the Baptist, the other to St. Martin of Tours, whom he himself specially venerated, and he then laid the foundations, a little higher up the hill, of a new monastery, which quickly eclipsed the fame of the less ambitious communities at Subiaco, and, in spite of their undoubtedly prior claim, is now everywhere looked upon as the parent institution of the Benedictine Order. Here the Rule, the main principles of which had already long been laid down and acted upon at Subiaco, became finally crystallized into its present form. It comprised the three great laws originally revealed, it is said, by an angel to St. Pachomius,* of poverty, chastity, and obedience, to which St. Benedict now added the obligation of manual labour and the important condition that, after a novitiate of one year only, the vows taken should be absolutely irrevocable. Every day during the probation time the entire code was read aloud to the novices, ending with the solemn injunction: ‘This is the law under which thou art to live and strive for salvation; if thou canst observe it, enter; if thou canst not, go in peace, thou art free.’

When St. Benedict had been for some little time at Monte Cassino his sister, Scholastica, came to live about two miles

* See *ante*, p. 15.

from his convent. Though she never took any vows, she has been looked upon as the first nun to join her brother's order, and it is certain that a little community of holy women, who followed a fixed rule of life, soon gathered about her. Once a year only the Abbot indulged himself in going to see his sister, to whom he was devotedly attached, and it is related that the last time he was with her before her death she entreated him to remain with her till the next day. He replied that to do so would be to neglect the duty he owed to his monks, from whom he had never yet been absent at night. Then St. Scholastica bent her head in earnest prayer to God, and even as she prayed a mighty tempest of wind and rain arose, so that it was impossible for anyone to venture forth. Recognising in this sudden storm a direct sign from heaven, St. Benedict consented to stop with his sister, and the two talked together until the morning broke. Of what they spoke has never been revealed, for St. Benedict himself is silent, but the probability is that St. Scholastica told her brother that she knew her end was near, and commended to his care the sisters who were to be left without her guidance. She was taken ill two days afterwards, and at the moment of her death St. Benedict is said to have seen her soul ascending to heaven in the form of a white dove. He sent to ask if she had indeed passed away, and, hearing that it was so, he ordered her body to be brought to his own monastery and buried in the grave he had already prepared for himself. In spite of this well-contested fact, the people of Le Mans claim to own the relics of St. Scholastica, and assert that her influence saved them from the Calvinists in 1563, an episode still commemorated by a solemn procession on her fête day, July 11.

Another remarkable incident of the latter part of the career of St. Benedict was his interview with Totila, or Badurla, the chivalrous King of the Ostrogoths, who, hearing of the holy life led by the Abbot of Monte Cassino, came to ask for his blessing. St. Benedict received him courteously, but before he would give him the privilege he sought, he made him confess his past sins, for which he rebuked him as sternly as if he had been one of his own monks. The King eagerly promised amendment, and St. Benedict, having forgiven and blessed him, dismissed him with the prophecy: 'Thou shalt enter Rome and reign nine years, but in the tenth thou shalt die.'

As is well known, though St. Benedict himself did not live to see it, his words were literally fulfilled, for after a brief time of triumph, Totila was slain in 552 at the battle of Tadino, which finally broke the power of the Goths in Italy.

Soon after the memorable visit of Totila to Monte Cassino, St. Benedict was taken ill, and, after six days of great suffering, he in his turn knew that the end was near. He called his favourite monks around him, bade them open the tomb in which his sister lay, and carry him to it. They obeyed, and, having received the last sacraments, he declared his resolve to meet his judge standing, and by a great effort he rose to his feet. Supported by his sorrowing disciples, he put up a last prayer to God to receive his spirit, and so expired. He was buried beside St. Scholastica, and, except that some of his bones are said to have been taken in the seventh century to the French Abbey of Fleury, his remains have been left undisturbed in their first resting-place. St. Gregory the Great, who had a profound admiration for St. Benedict, relates that, at the moment of the great Abbot's death, two of his monks, of whom one was St. Maurus, noticed below,* saw a gleaming pathway of light leading up to the sky, and heard a voice saying, 'Lo, this is the path by which Benedict, the beloved of God, hath ascended to heaven.'

In works of art St. Benedict sometimes wears the black and sometimes the white habit, the former when he appears as the original founder of the Subiaco and Monte Cassino monasteries, the latter when he is represented as Patron of the later institutions of the reformed Benedictines of Clairvaux, Citeaux, Camaldoli or Vallombrosa. Occasionally he is clean shaven, but as a rule he has a long, white beard, and his appearance is extremely noble and dignified. The emblems given to him are numerous, but each one has its very distinctive meaning. The thorny bush beside him has reference to the penance he inflicted on himself in his lonely retreat at Subiaco; the holy water sprinkler to the power of his holiness over evil spirits; the broken sieve at his feet recalls his first miracle; the broken cup upon a book held in his hand the frustrated attempt to poison him; the loaf of bread with the serpent issuing from it another conspiracy against him; when a poisoned loaf was sent to him as a gift by his enemies; the raven generally connected with the bread recalls the tradition that St. Benedict employed one

* See pp. 258, 259.



Alinari photo]

[*Monte Oliveto, Siena*

ST. BENEDICT LEAVING HOME

By Sodoma

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to take the poisoned food and drop it far away from human habitations; the dove hovering near the Saint refers to his vision of his sister's soul on its way to Heaven.

The long-hilted cross bearing the words *Crux sancti patris Benedicti** sometimes held by St. Benedict, as in an old miniature reproduced by Père Cahier in his 'Caractéristiques des Saints,' is typical of the victory won by the holy Abbot over every evil thing, whilst the same idea is expressed by the scroll in the left hand bearing the legend: *Crux sacra sit mihi lux, non draco sit mihi dux. Vade retro Satana, nunquam suade mihi vana; sunt mala quæ libas, ipse venena bibis.*†

On the celebrated medal of St. Benedict, worn by his votaries as a protection from poison and other perils, these inscriptions are worked in, and are supposed to be efficacious even without the effigy of the Saint, which is sometimes omitted.

As Abbot of Monte Cassino, St. Benedict sometimes holds an open book, on the leaves of which are written the first words of the rule of his Order, *Ausculte, Fili, Verba Magistri* (Hearken, my son, to the words of thy Master). A three-thonged scourge is also occasionally given to him, in memory of his stern self-repression; and a ball of fire appears now and then above his head, because he is said to have seen the soul of St. Germanus of Capua ascending to Heaven at the moment of that prelate's death. Instances occur of a bell hanging beside St. Benedict, in allusion to a story to the effect that the devil one day broke the bell by means of which the hermit Romanus used to let the recluse know that his food was about to be lowered to him.

The Orsini of Italy claim that St. Benedict belonged to their family, and for this reason his figure is sometimes worked into their coat of arms. The celebrated Abbot is supposed to have the power of saving his votaries from the power of the evil eye, from sorcery, poison, fevers, and from the painful diseases of stone and gravel, the last on account of a miracle he is said to have wrought on behalf of Henry II. of Bavaria, who recovered from a long illness through the intercession of St. Benedict, to whose tomb at Monte Cassino he had made a pilgrimage. The incident is commemorated in a finely

* The Cross of the Holy Father Benedict.

+ May the Holy Cross be my light, may I never follow the serpent. Get thee behind me, Satan, never entice me to vanity; as thou to me an evil draught didst offer, so mayst thou thyself have poison to drink.

sculptured Altar-piece originally placed in a church at Bâle, but now in the Cluny Museum, Paris, in which St. Henry—for he, too, has been canonized—kneels with his wife, St. Cunegunda, at the feet of the Saviour, who is accompanied by three archangels and St. Benedict.

Amongst the many boys who were sent to Subiaco to be educated by St. Benedict were two, who later, in their turn became Saints, and are so often associated in art with their spiritual father that their stories must be related here. They were Maurus, aged ten, the son of a Roman patrician named Equitius, and Placidus, aged five, the son of the Senator Tertullus. The Abbot at once became devotedly attached to the little fellows, taking them under his own special care, and bringing them up as if they had been his own children. From the first they were set apart from their fellow collegians by their earnest love of Christ, whose yoke, says an old chronicler, they bore in their earliest youth. On one occasion, when Placidus had fallen into the lake when drawing water for the use of the monastery, Maurus rushed after him and saved him at the risk of his own life, walking, it is said, upon the surface of the water, as if it had been dry land.

As soon as they were old enough, the boys were, by their own choice, admitted into the Benedictine Order as novices, and they both eventually took upon them the full vows of monks. St. Maurus was sent to spread the rule in France, and, after meeting with great success in that country, he is said to have visited England, where, strange to say, his memory is preserved in the surname of Seymour, a corruption of St. Maur, the famous historic family to which it belongs, having come originally from the Norman town of St. Maur, named after the Benedictine missionary. After a long life of active service, St. Maurus died at the Abbey of Glanfeuil or St. Maure-sur-Loire, which he had himself founded, and was at first buried in its chapel, though his remains were later transferred to St. Maur des Fossés, two leagues from Paris.

Very different to the peaceful, successful life of St. Maurus was that of his foster-brother, St. Placidus, who was sent in the first bloom of youth to found a monastery at Messina. There he was soon joined by two younger brothers and his sister Flavia, who wished to emulate the example of St. Scholastica by forming a community of nuns under the



Alinari photo

[*Parma Gallery*

THE MARTYRDOM OF SAINTS PLACIDUS AND FLAVIA

By Correggio

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superintendence of her brother. Not long after the arrival of the happy family party, and before St. Flavia had been able to begin her work, the convent of St. Placidus was besieged by pirates, who, having taken the Abbot, his sister, and thirty of his monks prisoners, gave them their choice between denial of Christ and death. Needless to add that they all chose the latter, and they were massacred outside the monastery, Saints Placidus and Flavia being the first to suffer.

The bodies of these, the earliest of the many martyrs of the great Benedictine Order, were left on the ground for some days, but, when the pirates had withdrawn, a survivor from the convent interred the monks where they had fallen, and took the remains of Saints Placidus and Flavia to Messina, where they reverently buried them in the Church of St. John the Baptist.

The special attributes of St. Maurus are a pair of scales, because it is supposed to have been his business to weigh out the food of the monks at Monte Cassino; a pilgrim's staff, because he was sent as a pilgrim to spread the rule in France; a crutch, on account of the cures said to have been wrought at his tomb at St. Maur des Fossés; or, as in a quaint leaden badge of pilgrimage found in the Seine, he has his pastoral staff in his left hand, and a crutch beside him.

Sometimes St. Maurus is seen walking on the water as a grown man, wearing the robes and holding the crozier of an abbot, although he was not even a monk at the time of the rescue of his foster-brother; or he is represented alone kneeling at an altar and gazing up at the shining path by which he is said to have seen the soul of St. Benedict ascending to heaven. As a general rule, however, he is accompanied by Saints Placidus and Flavia, who rank with him as the first missionary Saints of the Benedictine Order, which was later to send forth so many successful preachers of the Gospel. St. Maurus is specially revered in France, but is invoked in all Roman Catholic countries by tinkers, copper-smiths, and braziers, it has been suggested because his name Maur resembles the word Moor, and the result of following these trades is to make the hands and face black. In Belgium St. Maurus is also the patron Saint of tailors, why it is difficult to explain.

As is the case with many monks who made a vow to refrain from unnecessary speech, St. Placidus is often represented with

his finger on his mouth, a peculiarity which is, however, said to refer to his having had his tongue cut out before he died, which did not prevent his continuing to preach to his murderers until death ended his sufferings. A crescent is also an occasional attribute of his, because he met his fate at the hands of Moorish pirates, and the sword is given to him as having been the instrument of his martyrdom. In the celebrated picture by Correggio, now in the Parma Gallery, painted for the Benedictine Church of S. Giovanni, one assassin is plunging a sword into the heart of St. Flavia, whilst another with raised weapon is about to strike off the head of St. Placidus, who awaits the blow kneeling, with a smile full of heavenly joy.

Amongst the many beautiful representations of St. Benedict with his beloved pupil, St. Placidus, none is more celebrated than the group by Perugino now in the Vatican gallery, which formed part of the great painting of the 'Ascension' in S. Pietro in Perugia, the principal scene of which is in the Lyons Museum. In the centre of the painting is St. Benedict wearing the black robe and cowl of his Order which set off his pale face and long white beard, holding in his right hand the holy water sprinkler, and in his left a closed book, whilst on one side is St. Placidus, and on the other St. Flavia, each bearing the martyr's palm.

Another fine devotional painting in which St. Placidus is associated with St. Benedict—this time with St. Maurus instead of St. Flavia opposite to him—is the large composition by Paolo Veronese now in the Pitti Gallery. In it St. Scholastica, her dove above her head, is introduced kneeling with some of her nuns at the feet of her brother, whilst in a glory above is seen the Marriage of St. Catherine.

In the fresco of 'Christ in Glory' in the monastery of S. Severo at Perugia, begun by Raphael and completed after his death by Perugino, Saints Benedict, Maurus, and Placidus are grouped together as equals. In the fine Altar-piece by Francia now in the Parma Gallery, St. Benedict, with St. Giustina, is on one side of the Blessed Virgin, and Saints Placidus and Scholastica are on the other.

In the Reliquary designed by Pinturicchio, now in the Berlin Gallery, representing Saint Augustine in glory with Saints Bernard and Benedict below, the figure of the last-named is

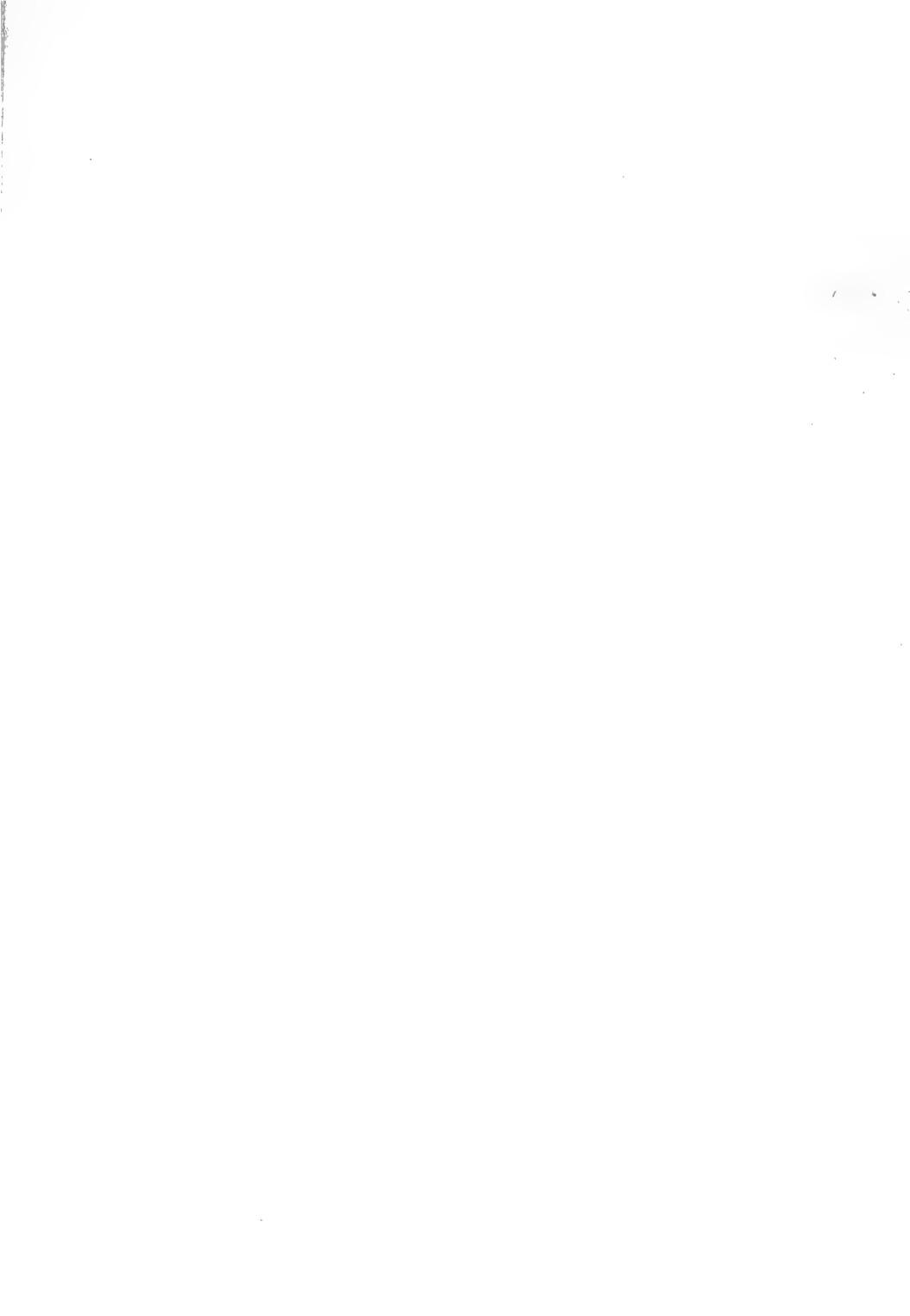


Broggi photo]

IPPOLITA SFORZA, WITH SAINTS SCHOLASTICA, AGNES, AND CATHERINE

By Bernardino Luini

[San Maurizio, Milan



remarkably fine ; in the Sacristy of S. Niccolo at Florence is a panel by Gentile da Fabriano of the 'Descent of the Holy Ghost' in the form of a dove, beneath which are various groups of Saints, including St. Benedict leading a chained devil. In Perugino's 'Assumption of the Virgin,' in the Academy, Florence, St. Benedict is ranked with the Archangel Michael ; in Fra Angelico's 'Great Crucifixion,' in S. Marco, Florence, he stands in a place of honour amongst the principal Saints ; in the same subject by Perugino, in S. Maria dei Pazzi, Florence, he kneels beside St. John the Evangelist ; and in the celebrated lost fresco by Correggio of the 'Coronation of the Virgin,' which was destroyed when the apse of S. Giovanni Evangelista, at Parma, was removed to enlarge the church, but of which there fortunately is a copy in the Parma Gallery by one of the Carracci, Saints Benedict and Maurus are also introduced.

A beautiful interpretation of the saintly character of St. Scholastica is that by Luini, in one of the lunettes of S. Maurizio, Milan, in which she is grouped with Saints Agnes and Catherine ; in certain scenes from the life of her more celebrated brother, she appears with her dove, and sometimes with rain falling near her, in memory of the storm she called up, which has led to her being invoked as a protector in bad weather ; or she holds a church in her hand, in allusion to her foundation of the first Benedictine nunnery. Scarcely, if at all, inferior in beauty to the Luini fresco is the Altar-piece by Francia in the Parma Gallery, in which Saints Benedict and Giustina are on one side of the Virgin, and Saints Placidus and Scholastica on the other, the last-named with her dove, its wings outspread as if to take flight, resting on an open book held in her left hand.

In the cloisters of Monte Oliveto, Siena, Luca Signorelli had painted nine frescoes illustrative of the life of St. Benedict, when he was summoned to Orvieto. His work at Siena was completed by Sodoma, and the two sets of frescoes give a fairly complete epitome of the chequered career of the great monk. The first scene by Signorelli shows the Punishment for the attempt to poison St. Benedict, four devils being introduced in the background, tearing down the monastery of the would-be murderers, whilst others are carrying away the soul of Father Florenzo, the instigator of the crime. This is succeeded by

the First sermon of St. Benedict on Monte Cassino, with the pulling down of the statue of Apollo by the converted heathen. The third scene shows the Exorcism of the evil spirit, who is endeavouring to stop the building of the monastery by sitting on a large stone which several monks are trying to move. Then follows the Revenge of the demon for his defeat, before the prayers of St. Benedict compel him to retire; then the Restoration of a monk to life who had been crushed by a stone in the struggle; several peaceful Scenes in the refectory, in one of which the Abbot is convicting certain of his monks of having broken their vows of fasting; with a similar subject in the open air, the Reproval of a young brother in the presence of the assembled fathers for having yielded to the temptations of the evil one when sent on a mission from the convent. In it the devil appears in the guise of a traveller, his horns poking up through his cap, and listens attentively to the indictment of his victim; the various scenes in which the young monk had transgressed his vows being depicted in the background. The last two subjects by Signorelli are perhaps the best, and give a probably true rendering of two historical incidents: the Interview between St. Benedict and one of Totila's warriors, who pretended to be the chief himself, and whom the Abbot accosted with the words, 'Put off, my son, these robes which do not belong to you,' and the 'Recognition of Totila,' who kneels at the feet of St. Benedict in the presence of his army, and by his attitude expresses the greatest reverence for the man of God.

When Sodoma took up the unfinished work of Signorelli he went back to the beginning of the life of the Abbot, his first scene being 'St. Benedict leaving home as a boy for the school at Rome,' mounted on a white horse, with his nurse in attendance on an ass, and his parents watching his departure, little dreaming that they were never to see him again. The student is next introduced amongst his fellow pupils; then he appears mending the broken sieve; receiving the white monastic habit from Romano the monk; kneeling in his cell in prayer whilst the devil in the form of a snake is breaking the cord by which Romano is letting down a basket of bread; eating his Easter dinner, brought to him by a priest; preaching to a group of seven shepherds; seated reading his Bible at the entrance to his cell, and rolling himself in brambles to change



Monte Oliveto, Siena

ST. BENEDICT EXORCISING THE EVIL SPIRIT

By Sodoma

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the current of his thoughts ; receiving the visit of six hermits, who kneel to entreat him to become their Abbot ; frustrating the attempt to poison him and quitting the monastery in anger ; superintending the building of the first monastery at Subiaco : receiving the two children, Maurus and Placidus, from their respective fathers ; healing a monk possessed of a devil ; bringing water from a rock for the use of his monks ; and recovering, in the presence of several spectators, a hatchet which had been dropped into the lake by a labourer. This graphic incident is succeeded by the Rescue from drowning of St. Placidus and St. Maurus, followed by various minor episodes of the life of St. Benedict at Monte Cassino, the series ending with the Death of the Saint, the Funeral mass, the Apparition of the Abbot to two sleeping monks, and the Burning of the monastery of Monte Cassino by the Goths.

Other interesting series of scenes from the life of St. Benedict are the frescoes, unfortunately much damaged, ascribed to Lo Zingaro, in the cloisters of S. Severino, at Naples, those in S. Miniato at Florence, by Spinello Aretino, those on the predella of an Altar-piece, by Francesco di Giorgio, in the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, and the ten oil paintings by Philippe de Champagne, now in the Brussels Gallery, probably executed for the Abbey of the Val de Grace, at Paris. With these may be named the forty-eight seventeenth-century carved Choir-stalls in S. Giorgio Maggiore, Venice, by Albert de Brule, which give graphic renderings of all the important incidents of the career of the much-loved Abbot.

Separate subjects from the life of St. Benedict, or that of St. Scholastica, are, of course, of constant occurrence in the convents of the Benedictine Order, and elsewhere. The 'Restoration to life of a Child' has been painted, for instance, by Subleyras and Lesueur, the 'Giving of the Rule to the New Order' by Simone Avanzi, the 'Penance of the Brambles' by Jacopo Palma, the 'Sending forth of Saints Maurus and Placidus' by Arrigo Fiammingo, the 'Bringing of food for St. Benedict by Peasants' by Guido Reni, and the 'Recognition of the Equerry of Totila' by De Crayer, whilst the 'Last visit of St. Benedict to his Sister,' the 'Death of St. Scholastica,' 'St. Benedict seeing her Soul ascending to Heaven,' and the so-called 'Suore morte,' are sometimes added to the incidents enumerated above.

The ‘*Suore morte*,’ which was included in the now destroyed frescoes by the Carracci and their followers in S. Michele in Bosco at Bologna, well-known from engravings, commemorates a quaint legend to the effect that, after their death, two nuns who had greatly troubled St. Benedict by their love of gossip during their life, could not rest in their graves until he forgave them. They were buried in the Chapel of Monte Cassino, and whenever the deacon uttered the usual words before the elevation ‘let those who are excommunicated and forbidden to partake, depart,’ two shadowy forms used to emerge from the ground and flit away, until at last St. Benedict had pity on them, and told them that their sins were pardoned.

Occasionally incidents from the legends of Saints Maurus and Placidus are treated independently of their connection with their celebrated foster-father. In France, where St. Maurus is specially honoured, he is often introduced leaning on his abbot’s staff, walking on the water upheld by two angels, or receiving from St. Benedict the rule of the order, and the scales for weighing the food of the monks. In the south of Italy, and in Sicily, St. Placidus is a very favourite Saint, and appears holding his martyr’s palm, either alone or with others in ecclesiastical decoration; receiving a lily from the Blessed Virgin, a crown from St. Joseph, and a cross from the Divine Child; or kneeling at an altar with a sword in his breast, one hand held by an angel, who catches his blood in a cup.

It was not until several centuries after his death that the cult of the great founder of the Benedictine Order spread beyond his native country, and the first abbey named after him in the British Isles was that built by Canute, on the coast of Norfolk, known as St. Benets at Holm, of which, though a few ruins are all that now remain, the Bishop of Norwich is still titular Abbot. In the fourteenth-century windows of St. Pierre, at Chartres, St. Benedict is grouped with St. Maurus, and in the celebrated fifteenth-century reredos of Winchester Cathedral he is placed next to St. Giles. Some of the supposed representations of him in English churches are, however, really meant for the later St. Benedict Biscop.*

* See ‘The Saints in Christian Art,’ vol. iii., chap. iv.



Alinari photo]

[*Parma Gallery*]

THE "PARMA" ALTAR-PIECE, 1515, WITH SAINTS BENEDICT, SCHOLASTICA,
AND PLACIDUS

By Francia

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CHAPTER XXVII

SAINTS RADEGUND, MONEGONDA, AND URSULA

THE story of Queen Radegund is full of pathetic interest, and reflects in a remarkable degree the spirit of the troubled time at which she lived. She was of German birth, the daughter of Bertiaire, a heathen King of Thuringia, and her childhood was darkened by the fierce quarrels which were then always going on amongst the rival chieftains of her native land. When still a mere child she was left an orphan through the murder of her parents, and at the age of twelve she and her only surviving brother, a little lad of eight or nine, were carried into captivity by Frankish invaders, under Clotaire I., King of Soissons, who had first sacked the town of Erfurt, slaying all whom they did not consider it worth while to take prisoners. Even then Radegund was remarkable for her beauty, and Clotaire resolved to have her well educated, so that she might become his wife when she was old enough. He therefore sent her and her brother to one of his palaces on the Somme, where they were kindly treated, and lived very happily together until Radegund was eighteen years old. A messenger then arrived at the palace to say that the King was on his way to claim his bride, and the poor girl, who could not forget his cruelty to her fellow-countrymen, and had, moreover, already resolved to dedicate her life to God, tried to escape in a boat at night. Her absence was soon discovered ; she was pursued and brought back to meet her fate.

When the bridegroom arrived, he was delighted to find how lovely his ward had become ; but she flung herself at his feet, and besought him with many tears to let her become a nun. He merely laughed, and compelling her to rise embraced her fondly, promised that he would be a good husband to her, and bade her prepare to return home with him. She was compelled to consent, and her one comfort was that her brother was allowed to go with her. Arrived at Soissons, she was married to Clotaire with great pomp, but her forebodings were all too soon fulfilled. Though nominally Queen, she found that she was but one of many women whom her husband professed to love. Moreover, her heart was daily

torn by the terrible scenes of oppression she had to witness, for the King never hesitated to indulge his fierce temper on the slightest provocation. Open murder and secret assassination were of constant occurrence, and the Court was daily disgraced by scenes unfit for a pure-hearted woman to witness. When Radegund ventured to remonstrate, the King taunted her with being a nun, and at last he filled up the measure of his iniquities by ordering her brother to be slain. This last blow simply broke the heart of the Queen. She told Clotaire that she could remain in his palace no longer, and he, ashamed for once of what he had done, gave her leave to withdraw. She went first to Noyon, where she was received with all honour by Bishop Medardus, to whom she confided her sorrows, and her great wish to take the veil. He tried to persuade her that her first duty was to her husband, and declared that it was against the custom, if not the law, of the Church, to allow a married woman to take the veil. She, however, protested that she would rather die than return to the King, and at last she won her way.

Medardus consecrated Radegund deaconess, thus making it impossible for her husband to claim her again, and she withdrew first to Tours, and then to Poitiers, where, with the sanction of King Clotaire, who really seems to have behaved with considerable generosity to the wife who had deserted him, she built an important nunnery, which was soon filled with holy women of every rank in life, ready to obey the foundress in all things. St. Radegund, having appointed one of them, named Agnes, to be Abbess, took the lowest place in the community herself, waiting on the whole household, and reserving neither property nor privileges. In spite of this she was the real ruler of the household, consulted at every turn, as proved by several significant little anecdotes told by her biographers. One day, for instance, as she was walking with her nuns in the garden of the convent, one of them suddenly stopped and cried, 'Oh, listen ! there's a song I used to sing myself.' Sure enough some wandering musicians passing outside the walls were singing a song Radegund had often heard at Court, but all she said was, 'I wonder that you can still take pleasure in such worldly sounds,' adding, when the nun made another attempt to induce her to listen : 'I have not heard one note.'

Many costly gifts were sent to St. Radegund by those who had known her at Court and still looked upon her as their Queen, so that her convent soon became one of the richest in France. Even the Emperor was ready to bestow on her community anything she chose to ask, and she begged him to procure for her a piece of the true cross. He complied at once, sending her a fragment of the sacred wood set in gold and precious stones, adding to the priceless gift a book of the Gospels bound in an equally costly manner. The relic of the cross was placed in the church of the monastery by the Archbishop of Tours with great pomp and ceremony, and it is related that the beautiful hymn, 'Vexilla Regis' ('The royal banners forward go'), was composed for the occasion by Venantius Fortunatus, the future Bishop of Poitiers, who was then acting as chaplain to the nunnery, henceforth to be known as that of the Holy Cross.

It is said that Venantius Fortunatus combined with his clerical duties the post of secretary to Queen Radegund, for whom he had conceived a romantic and passionate attachment. He took priest's orders for the sake of being near her, and the fact that she could employ a man as her secretary is an incidental proof that, in spite of all the accounts of the great strictness with which her convent was ruled, discipline was really not nearly so severe as it became in later times. There was a difference of at least twenty years between the ages of St. Radegund and her chaplain, whom she looked upon as a younger brother, but his devotion must have done much to cheer the last few years of her life. To his pen is due a beautiful memoir, one of the chief sources of information concerning her life, much of which was dictated to him by her own lips.

Except for a few visits to other convents to study their management, St. Radegund rarely left Poitiers, and she died in her own nunnery at the age of seventy. She was buried in the chapel of the abbey, where her tomb, at which many miracles are said to have been performed, is still visited by numerous pilgrims.

As a matter of course, various legends have gathered about the memory of the much-loved Abbess. On one occasion Christ Himself is said to have appeared to her to tell her she should be one of the brightest jewels in His crown, and the

people of Poitiers still proudly show a stone in the church dedicated to her, bearing the supposed impress of the Master's foot. When St. Radegund was fleeing from Clotaire before she became his wife, she passed through a field where a peasant was sowing wheat, and told him if anyone inquired whether he had seen a woman such as herself, he was to reply 'Yes; when this corn was planted.' As soon as she was gone the corn sprouted, and before the pursuers came up the wheat was full grown, so that the peasant only spoke the truth in obeying the fugitive's orders, who thus escaped, the questioners being evidently somewhat unobservant of the seasons.

When St. Radegund became Queen her power of working miracles seems to have continued. One day, as she was walking in the palace gardens, she was distressed by hearing the sound of weeping, with the clanking of chains, on the other side of the wall, and was told that prisoners were shut up and chained there, waiting for the King's orders concerning their fate. Shocked and distressed, she prayed earnestly to God for the sufferers, whose fetters fell off, whilst the doors of their dungeon flew open, and they were able to escape.

This remarkable incident led the Trinitarians, founded in the thirteenth century by Juan de Melba for the release of captives, to choose St. Radegund as their patron, and for this reason she sometimes appears amongst the great monks and nuns of their order.

The usual attributes of St. Radegund in art are a crown, beneath which flows a long white veil, the former in allusion to her rank as Queen, the latter to her position as Abbess, and a cross, in memory of her having obtained a piece of the true Cross for her monastery. Occasionally, as in a stained glass window in her church at Poitiers, she wears a mantle embroidered with fleurs-de-lys, although her husband did not become King of France until long after she had left him. Now and then, though wearing the robes and veil of a nun, she holds a sceptre tipped with the French national emblem, or a tunic strewn with fleurs-de-lys is combined with a mantle adorned with castles, in allusion probably to her old home at Erfurt. In fact, in spite of her renunciation of all dignities, she remained truly a Queen to all about her till her death, and

later artists have been as little able as were her contemporaries to forget the monarch in the nun.

Now and then St. Radegund is grouped with a priest, who in his turn is associated with a fox about to drop a chicken. This is on account of the friendship between the Queen and a holy man named Junian, to whom she used to resort for advice in her early difficulties as Abbess. He is said to have had a remarkable power over animals, and one day, in the presence of St. Radegund, he made a fox give up at a word a stolen chicken. Junian gave the Queen a chain she always wore as a kind of talisman, and she is said to have supplied him with clothes made by her own hand. When wolves or other wild animals are introduced near St. Radegund, it is the result of a confusion which has arisen between her and St. Radiana, who lived in the thirteenth century, and is said to have been miraculously preserved when attacked by starving wolves.

In the fifteenth-century sculptures of the west front of a church in the village of Missy, near to which the fugitive bride is said to have hidden in a cave, several scenes of her life are graphically depicted, including her Flight from the palace, her Interview with Bishop Medardus, who is supposed to have persuaded her to marry the King, her Consecration as deaconess, the Foundation of her abbey at Poitiers, her Death surrounded by her nuns, and the Ascent of her soul to heaven, upheld by two angels.

The patron Saint of Poitiers, Peronne, and other French towns, St. Radegund is also much honoured in England, where many churches—notably one at Scruton in Yorkshire, one at Maplebeck in Nottinghamshire, and one at Grayingham in Lincolnshire—are dedicated to her. Her name, with that of the Blessed Virgin and of St. John the Divine, was also associated with the Benedictine nunnery at Cambridge, which was converted into Jesus College in the fifteenth century, and the memory of the royal Saint is still preserved in the fine modern windows of the present chapel.

A celebrated contemporary of St. Radegund was St. Monegonda, who, after leading the life of a recluse for many years, became Abbess of a nunnery at Tours, where she was credited with working many miracles, including the blessing on her death-bed of a cruse of vinegar and a barrel of salt. The vinegar and salt were, it is said, never exhausted, and many

miracles of healing were wrought with their aid. St. Monegonda appears sometimes amongst other French Saints with a barrel beside her, and she is also occasionally represented receiving food through the window of her cell.

The fame alike of St. Radegund and St. Monegonda has been eclipsed by that of the much-loved maiden, St. Ursula, of whose very existence there is no absolute proof, yet whose image is enshrined in the affections of thousands of votaries, who look upon her as the very type of purity and self-sacrificing devotion. There are several versions of the wild and romantic legend of St. Ursula, of which the following is, perhaps, the most generally received. The only daughter of a King of Brittany, called by some Theonotus, by others Maurus, she lost her mother when she was fifteen, but so great was her wisdom that she was able to reign as Queen over her father's court, and to look after his large establishment, as well as if she had had many years of experience. Worshipped by her subjects for her beauty and the generous kindness she showed to all, she was also renowned far and near for her learning, no maiden, except, perhaps, St. Catherine of Egypt, ever having known so much about history or science as she did. She knew all about everything that had happened all over the world before her own time; she understood astronomy, astrology; and, more remarkable still, she had solved the mystery of the fickle winds, for she could prophesy which way they would blow at any given time. It was truly no wonder that such a prodigy of beauty and accomplishment should have had many suitors, but in the midst of all her happy prosperity the Princess Ursula had already resolved to dedicate her life to God alone. She confided her determination to her father, who was at first pleased, thinking that this would mean he should keep his beloved child at home. He, however, asked her what he should say to the ambassadors, who were even then on their way to demand her hand for Prince Conon, the only son of Agrrippinus, King of Cornwall, who was in every respect a suitable match for her, being celebrated for his noble appearance, his good heart, and his great learning. To all of which St. Ursula merely replied: 'Wait till the messengers arrive, and I will tell you what to say.'

Not long after this the Cornish envoys appeared at Court with a long train of attendants, bearing costly gifts from Prince



[*Venice Academy*

THE DREAM OF ST. URSULA

By Vittore Carpaccio

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Conon for the bride he hoped to win. Now that King Maurus was face to face with the representatives of his powerful neighbour, whom he feared to offend, his courage failed him, and he withdrew to his own room to think the matter out, wondering whether it would not be best after all to persuade his child to accept the brilliant lot offered to her. As he sat alone in his chamber, Princess Ursula herself came in, and, guessing at once what was in his thoughts, she told her father to cheer up, for she would give the necessary answer herself. King Maurus eagerly inquired what that answer would be, but, with an arch smile, the maiden once more bade him have patience.

The next day, when the envoys returned to Court to ask what message they were to carry to their lord, they found Princess Ursula seated on a throne beside her father, and, after ceremonious salutations had been exchanged, she surprised all present by rising to address her suitor's representatives. First she bade them thank King Agrippinus and Prince Conon for the honour they had done her; then she declared that she accepted the latter as her bridegroom, and would never listen to any other, and lastly she imposed three conditions, namely: she was to have ten Cornish maidens of noble birth to be her companions, each of the ten to have a thousand maidens to do her service, and she herself yet another thousand to wait upon her; the marriage was to be a nominal one for three years, so that she and her 11,000 maidens might visit the shrines of the Saints; and lastly, King Agrippinus, his son, and all his Court were to be baptized, for, wound up this very astute bargainer, 'none other than a perfect Christian will I wed.'

It is difficult to understand how such very stringent terms as these could be accepted, for the advantages to accrue to Prince Conon were at the best very remote and uncertain. In spite of this, however, the ambassadors gave the ardent young suitor such a glowing account of the charms of the Princess that he did not hesitate for a moment to agree to everything. He had no difficulty in collecting the necessary maidens; his father sent out letters to all his vassals, telling them what was required, and from every part of Cornwall the beautiful girls came trooping, dressed in their best, all glad to be chosen to wait on one so renowned as Princess Ursula of Brittany. Led by the ten highly born damsels who were to have the privilege of being in constant personal attendance

on their mistress, they embarked for Brittany without fear, arriving in due course at the Court of King Maurus, where they were eagerly welcomed by Princess Ursula. She allowed them a few days' rest, and then bade them meet her in a meadow near her father's palace, to receive her instructions for the pilgrimage they were to make with her. It was only then that she broke the news to them that she expected them to renounce all earthly joy and devote their lives to Christ alone. Nevertheless, so wonderful was her eloquence, so entralling the power of her beauty, that not one of her hearers drew back. With one accord they lifted up their hands and eyes to Heaven, declaring that they would follow her to the death, and, summoning a priest, who had been waiting in readiness, the Princess had them all baptized then and there in a clear stream that flowed through the meadow.

Congratulating herself that by her means eleven thousand virgins were redeemed and dedicated to God, the Princess now spared a little thought to her lover and wrote a letter to him, in which she gave him permission to come to her father's Court to see her before she began her pilgrimage to the shrines of the martyrs. She employed the interval whilst waiting for his arrival in drilling her army of maidens, so that by the time he came all was ready for her departure. Some say that when Prince Conon at last met his exacting lady love, she relented so far towards him as to allow him to accompany her on her journey; others that she simply ordered him to take care of her father till her return. Whether he went with her or not, she and her maidens lost no further time before they embarked in the vessels prepared for them, and, accompanied by many holy priests, they started for Rome. They do not appear to have taken any captains or sailors with them, but to have known by instinct how to manage their boats. They paid a passing visit to Cologne, though it was not exactly on the way to Rome, and, whilst they were there, it was revealed to their leader that the whole party would suffer martyrdom in that city on their return, a prophecy which, instead of damping their ardour, filled them with joy, for, when St. Ursula told them of it, they burst out with one accord into a hymn of thanksgiving.

Resuming their voyage up the Rhine, the enthusiastic maidens came in due course to Basel, where they disembarked

and continued their journey on foot, all obstacles giving way before their triumphant progress, for they were everywhere received with enthusiasm by the natives of the districts traversed, and were, moreover, preceded by six angels, who with a word bridged the foaming mountain torrents and cut a pathway through the frozen snow.

As they approached Rome a stately procession of cardinals and priests, led by Pope Cyriacus himself, came to meet them, and St. Ursula, kneeling down on the ground at the feet of the holy Pontiff, entreated his blessing. He gave it gladly, and ordered that the eleven thousand maidens and their leader should be hospitably received by the citizens of the capital, who pitched tents for them on the plain outside the walls, daily bringing them a goodly supply of all they needed. Scarcely were they all settled in their tents before yet another party arrived from Brittany, this time of noble youths instead of maidens, led by Prince Conon, who had not unnaturally got tired of waiting for his bride. Ursula welcomed him kindly and introduced him to the Pope, who persuaded him to be baptized, changing his name to Ethereus, which signifies regeneration. Henceforth the ambition of the young lover was changed; he no longer aspired to reigning on earth with his beloved Ursula as the King Consort of Brittany, but to sharing her martyrdom and living with her in the courts of the Redeemer, for whom he, too, was now ready to lay down his life. The Princess, having thus won her own way, allowed Prince Conon to share all her devotions in Rome. Together, attended by their suites, they knelt at the shrine of the holy Apostles, and visited all the other sacred sites in Rome, praying no doubt in the Catacombs, where so many martyrs were interred. The Pope, who became much attached to them, would fain have kept them with him, but to his suggestion that they should make Rome their home, St. Ursula replied that they could not tarry longer, for already the angels were waiting at Cologne with the crowns of martyrdom prepared for them all. Finding his visitors obdurate in their determination to leave him, and eager to share the glory awaiting them, the holy Cyriacus resolved to go with them, and, in spite of the opposition of his cardinals, he actually did so.

Wonderful, indeed, must have been the sight presented by the Tiber when the united fleets of the Pope, the Princess, and

the Prince were collected together beneath the walls of Rome. The people of the city collected in vast crowds to watch the embarkation, weeping and wringing their hands, for well they knew that they would never see their beloved Pope again. After giving them his blessing, Cyriacus bade them a touching farewell, and, accompanied by two cardinals, an archbishop, and three bishops, he went on board the vessel prepared for him. Then the Prince, with his escort of young nobles, embarked, and, lastly, St. Ursula with her maidens. As the great fleet slowly made its way down the river, the hymns of triumph sung by those on board drowned the sobs and cries of grief of the spectators on shore, who remained to watch until the last sail had disappeared.

Meanwhile certain agents of the heathen, who were in Rome when the eleven thousand maidens arrived, had sent secret intelligence of all that had happened to the leader of the Huns then besieging Cologne with a large force of fierce warriors. When, therefore, the vessels, with their goodly freight of maidens and youths, appeared upon the Rhine, escorted by no more formidable advance guard than a number of old men, the Huns were ready to receive them. At first the warriors thought it would be best to slay the men and reserve the maidens as brides for themselves, but their leader, who knew that this would probably mean the conversion to Christianity of his whole army, issued the terrible order that all, without a single exception, were to be massacred. Then ensued a horrible scene. The heathens rushed upon their victims, slaying some with arrows, others with clubs and axes. The newly-baptized Prince Ethereus is said to have been the first to die. Pierced to the heart by an arrow, he fell at the feet of his beloved bride, who with a smile of rapture told him she would join him ere the day was over. The next victims were the Pope and his attendant churchmen, who one and all met their fate with unfaltering courage. Then the young nobles were massacred, and, last of all, the eleven thousand virgins, who had looked on unmoved at the awful scenes going on around them, and now welcomed their own martyrdom with eager joy, cheered and encouraged by their fair leader, who seemed to bear a charmed life in the midst of the carnage. Soon she remained the sole survivor of all the goodly company, and so noble was her aspect, so entralling her beauty, that not



[*Hospital of St. John, Bruges*

ARRIVAL OF ST. URSULA AT COLOGNE

By Hans Memling

one of the fierce warriors dared to lay a sacrilegious hand upon her. As she stood amongst the dead bodies of those whom she had led to the slaughter, the commander of the Huns approached her, and with courtly words entreated her to forgive him for the apparent cruelty of his conduct. It had been necessary, he explained, for the good of his people, but if she would forget the past and become his wife he would make her the greatest Queen in all Germany. Needless to add that St. Ursula met his advances with bitter scorn, and so scathing were the words with which she answered him that he lost all control himself. Bending the mighty bow he held in his hands, he aimed three arrows in rapid succession at his accuser, and all three transfixed the holy maiden's heart. She fell dead without so much as a sigh, and her pure spirit was seen ascending to Heaven, escorted by the angels, who had already received the souls of those who had preceded her in the glorious path of martyrdom.

According to another version of this extraordinary legend, perhaps the very wildest ever evolved by popular imagination, axes, not arrows, were the instruments of the martyrdom of St. Ursula and her maidens. The very axes used are supposed to have been preserved, and one of them drifted in some unaccountable way to England, where it was long treasured up in the London church known, on account of its possession of this precious relic, as St. Mary Axe, the original name of which was St. Mary the Virgin, St. Ursula, and the Eleven Thousand Virgins. In the sixteenth century this church ceased to be used for services, but it is alluded to under the name of St. Marie at the Axe by John Stow, the antiquarian, in his 'Survey of London and Westminster,' published in 1598.

As a matter of course, St. Ursula and her maidens were held in very high honour in all Roman Catholic countries, and the discovery near Cologne in the twelfth century of a vast accumulation of bones, seemed to lend probability to the legend respecting their fate. Some of these bones are still shown in a church dedicated to St. Ursula at Cologne, and when the news of their having been found reached Paris, the savants of the Sorbonne at once chose the leader of the virgins to be their patron Saint. Later, many religious orders for the education of young girls were founded in her honour and named after her, notably that known as the Ursulines, originated, in the sixteenth century,

by Angela of Brescia. St. Ursula is the patron Saint of unmarried girls, and is supposed to look specially after the interests of women engaged in teaching. She is also appealed to to secure a happy death, probably because of the joy with which she and her companions met their martyrdom.

The attributes of St. Ursula in art are numerous, and all easily explained by the different incidents of her legend. The white banner with the red cross she sometimes holds, as in a painting by Palma Vecchio, in the Vienna Gallery, is the Christian standard of victory, given to her on account of her having led so many to heavenly glory. In certain old calendars, the arrow, another constant emblem of St. Ursula, associated with a furred banner, marks her fête-day, October 21; and elsewhere, as on some old English rood-screens, and in a stained-glass window of Winchester Cathedral, she holds an arrow in each hand. A dove is now and then introduced near St. Ursula, because the place where she was buried is said to have been revealed, in the seventh century, to St. Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne, by a dove, which appeared to him when he was saying Mass. The ship seen beside the Saint refers, of course, to her voyages up the Rhine and down the Tiber; the crown on her head or at her feet, the richly embroidered robes, and the scarlet mantle lined with ermine, are all given to her in memory of her royal birth, and the buildings which often appear behind her are intended to represent those of Cologne. Sometimes, as on a rood-screen in the church of Eye, in Suffolk, and on the painting at one end of her celebrated Shrine at Bruges, St. Ursula is represented sheltering beneath her wide cloak a number of her companions, or a few of them are picturesquely grouped behind her.

Amongst the many representations of the popular legend of St. Ursula, none are more celebrated than the two series of paintings, one by Vittore Carpaccio, originally executed for the Chapel of the Scuola di S. Ursula, at Venice, but now in the Academy of that city; the other on the world-famous Reliquary in the Hospital of St. John, at Bruges, by Hans Memlinc. The nine paintings by Carpaccio, which are full of poetic feeling, and tell the romantic story with considerable dramatic force, represent the following incidents: The Ambassadors of the Cornish King asking the hand of St. Ursula of her father, on the right of which is seen the private inter-

view between Maurus and his daughter; the Leave-taking of the envoys from England and their Reception on their arrival at the court of their King. The fourth picture includes three scenes: The Parting between Prince Conon and King Agripinus, the first Meeting of St. Ursula and her lover, and their Farewell visit to King Maurus. In the fifth painting, the Pope and his retinue receive St. Ursula and her maidens outside Rome; in the sixth, St. Ursula is seen asleep in bed, with an angel, of whom she is evidently dreaming, approaching her; in the seventh, the Virgins are arriving at Cologne; in the eighth, St. Ursula and her maidens are being massacred on one side, whilst on the other the Funeral of the leader, who lies on a bier with her golden hair falling about her, is going on; and in the ninth, St. Ursula is receiving from angels hovering above her head, the crown of martyrdom, in the presence of her fellow-sufferers, who kneel in adoration below.

The paintings by Hans Memlinc at Bruges tell the same story, with certain modifications, with even greater force than do those of Carpaccio. The richly jewelled Gothic chest they adorn was constructed to contain certain relics of the Saint and her companions, and its sides, end, and roof are painted with a series of scenes in miniature, which rank not only as the finest works of their author, but as amongst the most remarkable examples of fifteenth-century art which have been preserved to the present day. The first painting represents the Arrival of the pilgrims at Cologne, on their way to Rome, their faces beaming with innocent joy as they step ashore, whilst a number of porters are seeing to their luggage, as if they were mere ordinary travellers. In the background appear the chief churches of Cologne, and on the left, through the windows of an upper room, a glimpse is obtained of St. Ursula, sitting up in bed, receiving from an angel the news that she and her maidens will be martyred on their return.

The subject of the second panel is the Landing at Basel: the sailors are furling the sails, and the maidens are eagerly chatting together, preparing for their long march across the mountains, or already setting forth up the hill beyond the town. On the third panel two distinct scenes are given: the Reception of St. Ursula on the steps of a Church by Pope Cyriacus, who bends down towards the kneeling maiden, touching her folded hands with one of his, whilst he raises

the other in the gesture of blessing. The companion subject is the Baptism of a number of young men, probably meant for the followers of Prince Conon, who stand in a large font with heads reverently bent, as a priest sprinkles water upon them. On the fourth panel the Departure from Rome is most graphically rendered ; the greater number of the maidens and the attendant clergy are already seated in a vessel, whilst the Pope, with a Cardinal behind him, stands on another, and is being helped from it to that containing St. Ursula. Near by a small boat containing a few belated virgins is hastily approaching, and in the background are seen some buildings of Rome and a boat full of the pilgrims, who have already started on the fatal voyage.

On the fifth panel the terrible Massacre is represented as already begun : the vessels lying side by side in the foreground, with the churches of Cologne rising up beyond them, are surrounded by a number of soldiers, who are shooting and stabbing the pilgrims with a kind of tempered enthusiasm which is almost comic, neither the maidens nor the churchmen showing any signs of panic, though some few of the former shrink a little from their impending fate. In the centre of one of the boats St. Ursula, who wears her crown, supports a dying girl whose heart is pierced with a sword, whilst a young man stretches out his arms towards the victim with a look of horror on his face.

On the sixth and last panel, the Death of St. Ursula herself is given : she has left her martyred maidens behind her, and stands upon the dry land outside the tent of the leader of the Huns, who, angry at her rejection of his suit, has just given the order for her death to one of his warriors ; the archer stands with bow bent, the arrow pointed at the heart of the Saint, whilst behind him waits a soldier with uplifted axe ready to give the *coup de grâce* should the first wound not be mortal. Considering the tragic nature of the subject, the whole scene is full of the most wonderful repose, accentuated by the attitude of a white greyhound, who lies at the feet of the doomed maiden, looking up at her without any sign of anxiety. In fact, the whole series of scenes well interprets the deeply-rooted faith in the certainty of the approaching triumph of the martyrs, which was shared by the artist and those for whom his work was executed ; a faith still held undimmed by many



[*St. John's Hospital, Bruges*

THE POPE RECEIVING ST. URSULA

By Hans Memling

of those who at the present day flock in crowds to see the wonderful Shrine and listen to the thrilling tale of the death of the eleven thousand virgins.

On the sloping roof of the Shrine are two large and four small medallions. In one of the former St. Ursula appears standing amidst her maidens holding an arrow in her hand; in the other she is being crowned by God the Father in the presence of the other two Persons of the Trinity, the Holy Ghost being symbolized by a dove hovering above her head. In each of the four smaller medallions is an angel singing the praise of the Saint, to the accompaniment of a different instrument of music.

Other celebrated representations of St. Ursula are the recumbent marble Figure, admirably expressing the repose of death, with a dove at the feet, in the Cathedral of Cologne; the miniature in the *Heures d'Anne de Bretagne*, in which the dying Saint, the arrow in her heart, stands amongst her dead maidens; and the painting by Martino da Udine in the Brera Gallery, Milan, in which the martyred maiden is seated on a throne with some of her virgins close to her, whilst others are seen issuing from an open door on either side.

CHAPTER XXVIII

SOME CELEBRATED MONKS AND HERMITS OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

A SPECIAL feature of the sixth century was the increasing love amongst all classes of society for the monastic life, and the number of those who retired from the world, either to lead an absolutely lonely existence in the desert or to join one or another of the many communities of hermits or monks already established, was ever on the increase. Amongst these, comparatively few became sufficiently famous to be associated with any special symbols, or to be represented individually in works of art, for self-effacement was from the first their chief aim, and it was, as a rule, in spite of themselves that public attention was attracted to their holiness.

In the early part of the century, so prolific of hermits

and monks, lived Saints Severinus, Guenolé, John Climacus, Maxentius, Venantius, and Leonard, whilst to the latter portion belonged Thierry, Lifard, Simeon, Gal, Hermengildus, Calais, Louvent, Sybard, Pourcain, Patroclus, John of Reomé, Cloud, Laumar, Aventin of Troyes, Junien, and Hervé, all of whom occasionally appear, each with some symbol by means of which he may be identified, in the ecclesiastical decoration of the districts in which they laboured.

St. Severinus, Abbot of a monastery at Agauna, in Valais, whose attribute in art is a luminous aureole, because a glory is said to have shone about his head on his death-bed, was sent for by King Clovis, when all the doctors of Gaul had failed to help him in a mysterious illness from which he was suffering. According to the legend, the holy man cured a leper on his way to the royal bedside, and restored the King to health by merely throwing his mantle over him.

Of St. Guenolé, Abbot of Landevenec, in Brittany, various quaint and touching stories are told. On one occasion, when he was walking with one of his monks, he met a leper, on whom he laid his hands, praying God to heal him. As he did so the leper disappeared in a blaze of glory, and the two holy men heard a voice saying : ‘As ye do not reject Me on earth, neither will I reject you in Heaven.’ Still more remarkable was the incident of the restoration to sight of the sister of St. Guenolé, who, when she was running after some wild geese, was attacked by one of them, that tore out and swallowed one of her eyes. She ran screaming to her brother, and he came to the rescue at once, ordered the goose to disgorge the eye, and restored it to its place, neither the bird nor the girl being any the worse for the incident. The fact that St. Guenolé is sometimes represented with a goose beside him may possibly have reference to this gruesome incident, but it is more probable that it is merely because his fête day falls on the 3rd March, about which time the wild geese come to Northern Europe from the South.

When some fierce pirates descended on Brittany, destroying all before them, St. Guenolé drove them back by merely asking God to destroy them ; when he wished to cross the river he was able to do so dry-shod ; when some robbers had got into the granary of his convent and were stealing the corn they suddenly found themselves rooted to the spot by the prayers of

the holy man, who, instead of punishing them, talked to them so kindly that they repented and joined his community; when water ran short, the wonder-working Abbot caused a fountain to spring up at his feet; and when he rung the bell for service the fishes in the water near the convent used to lift up their heads as if to show that they, too, heard the summons to pray. St. Guenolé also converted a wicked Count of Brittany, who had wrought much evil to the Church, persuading him to found the Bishopric of Quimper, and when at last the well-spent life of the saint came to an end, he expired standing at the altar at which he had just offered the holy sacrifice of the Mass.

St. John Climacus, Abbot of a monastery in Mount Sinai, whose emblem in art is a ladder, takes his second name from a book written by him in Greek, to which he gave the title of ‘The Ladder of Paradise,’ and in which he enumerated thirty steps as leading to perfection in the religious life.

St. Maxentius, Abbot of a monastery near Poitiers, whose memory is still preserved in the name of the little town of St. Maixent, is said to have saved his monks from massacre when his convent was attacked by the Visigoths, by merely appearing at the door. A barbarian raised his sword to strike the holy man to the heart, but was unable to effect his evil purpose, for his arm became stiff and powerless, a miracle which so wrought upon the rest of the warriors that they ceased fighting, to gaze at the Abbot and the soldier. When the attention of the whole army was arrested, St. Maxentius touched the hand of his would be assailant, who was at once able to use it again. The man fell on his knees asking forgiveness, others followed his example, and the monastery was saved. St. Maxentius is said to have been very fond of birds, and for this reason he is sometimes represented praying in his cell, with a number of his feathered friends about him, or with a single dove hovering above his head.

The story of St. Venantius, Abbot of a monastery in Touraine, is a very romantic one. He was of noble birth, and was betrothed as a young man to a beautiful girl, to whom he was much attached, but on the eve of the wedding he went to pray at the tomb of St. Martin of Tours, and there a great change came over him. He felt that he had to renounce all the joys of life and devote himself entirely to the service of God. Whether he took leave of his bride or not the legend

does not relate, but many wonders are said to have attended his long career as a monk. When he was assailed by evil spirits, who took the form of rams, they fled at the sign of the cross. One day, when he was at Mass in the church of St. Martin of Tours, where he still often went to pray, he saw a noble-looking old man come down from the window of the apse, who blessed the bread and wine and disappeared. Another time, as the words *Libera nos a malo* were being chanted at the altar, a voice from the grave repeated the sentence audibly, and some of the souls in purgatory appeared to St. Venantius, entreating him to pray for them. The chequered career of the Abbot is reflected in the representations of him, for he sometimes wears the hood and robes of a monk, combined with a sword and an escutcheon suspended from his waist. More rarely he is in the rich costume of a noble, and is blessing a lion's cub which crouches at his feet, in allusion to his life in the desert with no companions but the wild animals; or he appears in the complete costume of a monk, driving before him the devil, in the form of an imp.

Even more full of interest than that of St. Venantius is the legend of St. Leonard of Limousin, whose fame has spread far beyond his native land, many churches being dedicated to him, not only in France, but in England, especially in Sussex, where the parish of St. Leonard's-on-Sea and a large tract of forest land is named after him, whilst wild lilies of the valley are locally spoken of as 'St. Leonard's flowers.' The son of a wealthy nobleman, who was held in high honour at the court of Clovis I., the young Leonard early gave proof of a generous and pitiful disposition. Even before his conversion to Christianity, of which St. Remigius is said to have been the instrument, he was fond of visiting those in prison, and more than once he persuaded the King, with whom he was a great favourite, to release the captives taken in war.

As time went on the earnest young noble became more and more discontented with his easy, luxurious life, and, in spite of the opposition of his friends, he presently retired to the monastery of Misy, later known as St. Mesmin, near Orleans, which was then under the rule of his uncle, St. Euspicius. Even here, however, he found the discipline not sufficiently strict, and he resolved to withdraw to a yet more lonely spot in the forest of Limousin, there to prepare himself, in strict retire-

ment, for the work to which he meant to devote the rest of his life : the amelioration of the lot of prisoners. Soon after he had taken up his residence there, occurred the remarkable incident which has led expectant mothers to look upon St. Leonard as their special protector. The King of the country, who has been identified as Theodobert of Austrasia, was hunting near the cell of the hermit, accompanied by his wife and all his Court, when the Queen was suddenly taken seriously ill, and appeared to be at the point of death. Her attendants had made a couch of leaves for her, and were gathered about her awaiting the end, when someone suggested that the holy man, who was known to live not far off, should be sent for. A messenger was at once despatched, and St. Leonard obeyed the summons in all haste. The poor Queen was still alive when he arrived, and, kneeling down beside her, he prayed earnestly to God to save her. A few minutes later a fine boy was born, and the father, in his eager gratitude, offered to give St. Leonard as much land as he cared to ask for. He replied that he would be content with as many miles as he could ride round on his ass in a single night, and the King agreed to this suggestion. The royal party then retired, and St. Leonard set forth on his humble steed to mark out his new territory, which included a considerable tract of country.

Convinced that what had occurred was a direct leading from on high, St. Leonard now abandoned his solitary life, and, building a little oratory, to which he gave the name of Nouibiliac, he invited other enthusiasts to join him. An important monastery, which later in its turn became the nucleus of the town of St. Leonard, in Limousin, grew up from this small beginning, for hundreds of holy men flocked to the new institution, eager to help its founder in his efforts on behalf of those lingering in captivity either at home or abroad. So great, indeed, were the efforts of St. Leonard in the cause he had made specially his own, that he has been called the Howard of his day, and he is still revered throughout the whole of Europe as the protector of those who have lost their liberty, from whatever cause. He was not content, however, with releasing the bodies of those whom he had rescued ; he wished also to save their souls, and, before he sent them back into the world, he used to gather them together in his forest monastery to instruct them in the Christian faith. Thus did he

spread his influence far and near, for he had the rare gift of inspiring with his own enthusiasm all who were brought in contact with him, so that Noubiliac became a centre of missionary effort, radiating forth the light of the Gospel in every direction.

St. Leonard died peacefully about 559, in the monastery he had founded, but the work begun by him was carried on by others, and to his influence was due a real reform in the prisons of his time. His shrine in his own chapel at Noubiliac became a very popular place of pilgrimage, many—notably Prince Bohemund of Antioch, who had escaped from the Saracens as by a miracle—who believed they owed their rescue to his intercession, bringing chains in various materials as tokens of their gratitude.

The fête day of St. Leonard, November 6, is still kept as a holiday in many towns of Europe, and at Rimini it was long customary to release a captive on it. A fair, originally in his honour, is held at Badlesmere, in Kent, and in other English districts; and in a thirteenth-century account of the fêtes of Worcester, reference is made to St. Leonard's day being a half holiday in that city.

Water-carriers claim St. Leonard as their patron because he is said to have obtained a miraculous supply of water for his monks, and, for reasons it is difficult to define, he is also appealed to for aid by blacksmiths, coppersmiths, locksmiths, and porters, as well as by the greengrocers of Liège and the coopers of Bruges. The Benedictines claim that the popular Saint was a member of their Order, and for this reason he is often represented wearing the white or black habit and rope girdle. More rarely he has the chasuble of the deacon, although there is no proof that he was ever ordained. Chains are, of course, his chief attribute, his kindness to prisoners is also often symbolized by a slave kneeling at his feet. Sometimes his deacon's robes are embroidered with fleur-de-lys, in allusion to his noble birth, and he occasionally wears a crown for the same reason. In the Church of St. Pierre, at Limoges, he is seen as a deacon; in that of St. Michel, at Limoges, he wears the robes of a monk and has a long white beard. In the Museum of Limoges is a quaint wooden panel, with St. Leonard on one side and St. Catherine on the other; and at Limousin are preserved numerous statues, pictures, and repre-

sentations in enamel of the much-loved Saint. On a reliquary in the Church of Croissy, near Versailles, he appears as a deacon receiving an offering of their chains from two kneeling prisoners; in the Chapel of St. Leo at Corbeil he is seen, surrounded by his monks, kneeling at the feet of King Clovis, to whom he is presenting a petition, and on a wall of Frindesbury Church, near Rochester, is an old mural painting representing him with fetters in his hand. Above the Scuola della Carita at Venice, originally the home of a Confraternity for the redemption of captives, is a life-sized effigy of St. Leonard holding the chains of two liberated slaves kneeling at his feet; and scenes from his life are the subject of some of the mosaics in the Choir of S. Marco, including his Baptism, the Miraculous supply of water, the Delivery of some prisoners, the Saving of the life of the Queen, and the Founding of his monastery.

A celebrated representation of the patron of captives occurs in a painting by Correggio, now in the possession of Lord Ashburton, in which he is grouped with Saints Peter, Mary Magdalene, and Martha; and in the famous Bedford Missal, now in the National Library of Paris, the whole life-story of St. Leonard—or, as he is there called, St. Lionart—is very graphically given in miniature.

St. Thierry, a noted disciple of St. Remigius, who became Abbot of a monastery near Rheims, appears sometimes amongst other French Saints with an eagle above his head or beside him, because the site of the convent founded by him is said to have been pointed out to him by the king of the birds. He is also occasionally represented curing his namesake, King Thierry, of blindness.

St. Lifard, who is invoked against venomous reptiles, was Abbot of a monastery near Orleans, and won a great reputation for sanctity, is now and then grouped with other monks, his special attribute being a serpent coiled about a staff, because he is said to have told the people, who suffered from the ravages of a poisonous snake, to plant a staff in the ground near its haunts. The serpent attacked the staff, which fell upon and killed its assailant. To this quaint legend is sometimes added the yet more extraordinary detail that the staff was full of snakes, who, as they expired, cried aloud, ‘Lifard! Lifard!’,

St. Simeon, surnamed Salus, which signifies fool, was a holy man of Alexandria, who, after spending several years in retire-

ment in the desert, performed many wonderful works in his native town. He received his very unflattering nickname because he was fond of amusing children, and generally had a troop of them at his heels wherever he went. His distinctive attribute in art is a kind of bagpipe, and Jacques Callot, amongst others, has represented him playing on it, surrounded by a number of laughing girls and boys.

St. Gal, who, after living as a monk for many years in a monastery near Auvergne, was chosen Bishop of that city, and won many signal mercies for the flock under his care, has been represented receiving a white chasuble from the hands of an angel, in token of the great purity of his life; putting out a fire by throwing the book of the gospels into the flames, in token of his eager zeal in preaching against the heathen; or praying to God to stop a plague which was devastating his diocese, an angel sheathing a sword appearing above him, in token that his petition has been heard.

St. Hermengildes, who is much revered in the South of France, was the son of King Leovigildes, who had espoused the Arian heresy, and is said to have been beheaded by order of his father, because he refused to receive the holy communion from the hands of an Arian bishop. The young martyr is represented as a handsome man with long hair falling about his shoulders, bearing on his breast the sacred chrism or monogram of Christ, the special attribute of those who upheld the doctrine of the Trinity, holding a palm in one hand and treading a crown under foot, whilst on the ground beside him lies an axe, the instrument of his death. Certain old engravers, notably Burgkmair, in the series of plates executed for the Emperor Maximilian, have made the strange mistakes of giving the unnatural father a halo as well as his victim, and making the latter appear to resist the doom which the legend asserts he almost courted. In the Prado Museum, Madrid, there is a fine painting, by Francesco Herrera, representing the Triumph of St. Hermengildes after his martyrdom, in which the grouping of the figures is very good.

Of St. Calais, who founded the monastery of Menat, in Clermont, the touching story is told that, when he was living alone as a hermit in the forest, an aurochs, or wild ox, such as still roamed at large in northern France in his time, took refuge with him when pursued by the royal huntsmen. With the

terrified animal crouching at his feet, the holy man was discovered by King Childebert, who consented to spare the life of the aurochs, and remained for some time talking to St. Calais, in the end giving him a large tract of land on which to build a monastery. It is related further that a small barrel of water sufficed to give drink to the royal visitor and all his followers, the water being miraculously increased. Later, when the monastery had been in full working order for some time, and food was so scarce that the monks were threatened with famine, the place where a secret treasure was hidden was revealed to St. Calais, and the catastrophe was averted. In memory of the various incidents of his remarkable career, the attributes in art of the famous hermit are a buffalo, a barrel, and a pile of gold pieces. He appears occasionally, notably on the west front of Chartres Cathedral, with one or another of his distinctive symbols, amongst other French Saints.

St. Louvent, whose attribute in art is an eagle, and who is much honoured in the neighbourhood of Chalons-sur-Maine and Mende, was a holy hermit, said to have been murdered on the banks of the Maine by robbers, who cut off his head, and, putting it in one sack and the body in another, each weighted with heavy stones, flung both into the river. In spite of the precautions of the assassins, the body did not sink, and some shepherds who found it were reverently burying it when an eagle is said to have brought them the head.

St. Sybard, or Cybar, was a holy hermit, who dwelt for nearly forty years in a cell near Périgueux, only leaving it on errands of mercy such as the rescue of prisoners and captives. It is related that the doors of dungeons flew open at his approach, for which reason one of his attributes is a chain in his hands or a released captive kneeling at his feet. Wild animals are said to have loved him so much that they obeyed his slightest gesture; a doe once came and crouched at his feet as if to solicit a caress from him, a mother bird allowed him to stroke her in the nest, without showing signs of fear, and so on. Sometimes St. Cybar is represented emptying a bag of money on to a stone in token of his contempt for riches, or he stands in a luminous glory on which his virtues are inscribed, and in a stained-glass window in the church of La Rochefoucauld, Charente, he is seen with an angel appearing to him in answer to his prayers for guidance.

St. Pourcain, who appears sometimes either alone or with other Saints, holding in his hand a broken cup, from which a snake is issuing, was a holy hermit who miraculously escaped death from poison. He had left his retreat to plead with King Thierry for the people of Auvergne, who were being ruthlessly ravaged by the royal troops. The officers of the Court, who did not dare to refuse him admission, tried to get rid of him before he could see the King by offering him a cup of poisoned wine to refresh him after his journey. Knowing their evil design, he took it from them and, looking them full in the face, made the sign of the cross over the cup, which broke in his hand. The result of this proof of power was that he won not only the monarch but many of the nobles from the evil of their ways.

St. Patroclus, founder of the Abbey of Colombières in Berri, is occasionally represented gazing at a cross, because he is said to have found one in his cell when he returned to it after resisting a temptation to go back to the world.

St. John, of Reomay, in Burgundy, founder of the Abbey of Moutier St. Jean, is said to have lived for more than a century, and to have freed the neighbourhood of his monastery from a venomous serpent, who had poisoned the only supply of water, for which reason he is represented holding a chained dragon near a well, or standing beside the water from which a winged serpent is issuing.

St. Cloud was the grandson of St. Clotilda and the son of King Clodomir of Orleans, but he early resolved to leave the world to dedicate his life to God. He is, therefore, generally represented in the robes of a hermit kneeling opposite to a cross with his crown beside him on the ground. After many years of seclusion, he founded the monastery named after him about two leagues from Paris, where he died peacefully, leaving all his property to the Church and the poor. The royal recluse has been chosen by the nail-makers of Paris as their patron, on account of the resemblance of his name to the French word for nails. For the same reason he is supposed to be able to cure wounds inflicted by nails, and is occasionally represented holding a nail or a hammer in one hand.

St. Lomer, or Laumur, the son of a shepherd, kept his father's flocks as a boy, spending much of his time in prayer, and in early youth withdrew as a hermit to a forest near

Chartres, where he later founded the monastery of Corbion, now known as Montier-au-Perche, and became celebrated far and near for his wonderful works of healing and charity. He is often represented in northern France as a boy tending his sheep; as a monk counting out pieces of money, because one day, when a number of gold coins were sent to him by a dying nobleman to pay for masses for the repose of his soul, the holy man kept one only, it alone having been honestly come by. St. Laumur is also sometimes seen driving away a pack of wolves from a doe, or with the rescued animal at his feet, for she is said to have remained with him until her death, following him about like a dog. In the church of the beautiful abbey dedicated to the shepherd monk at Blois, various scenes from his life are represented in the mural paintings and stained-glass windows, and he is seen on his death-bed in the clerestory windows of the Cathedral of Chartres, whilst his life-sized figure is amongst the statues of the confessors on the south porch of the same building.

St. Aventin, the friend and companion of the more celebrated St. Lupus, withdrew entirely from the world in middle life, living in a little hut in the forest near his native town of Troyes, where, it is related, he was always surrounded by numbers of wild animals and birds, who showed no fear of him. His special attribute in art is a bear, because he is said to have drawn a thorn from the foot of one, which ever afterwards acted as his protector, sleeping outside his hut.

St. Junien, an Abbot of Poitiers, the friend and adviser of Queen Radegund, was also much beloved by animals, and is sometimes represented in old pictures with a fox beside him, whom he is ordering to give up a stolen chicken.

With the holy monks and hermits of the sixth century may be fitly associated the celebrated blind singer, St. Hervé, of whom many quaint and touching stories are told. His name means bitterness, and it was given to him by his father, who was a minstrel at the Court of King Childebert, because he was born blind. The little fellow early showed a great talent for music, and, when his mother was left a widow, he supported her by his singing, being led about by a little white dog, to whom he was greatly attached. One day, however, a wolf sprang upon the dog and killed it, which nearly broke the heart of St. Hervé, who wept so bitterly that he is said to have touched

the feelings of the murderer, for instead of devouring the carcase, the wolf fawned at the feet of the singer, and thenceforth acted as his guide. Accompanied by his strange escort, Hervé became a familiar figure in all the neighbourhood near his home, and was a welcome guest wherever he appeared. One day, when he was singing in a convent, the frogs in a pond near by disturbed him with their croaking, and he silenced them all but one with a word. That one, the smallest of them all, he allowed to retain its voice—why the story does not say. St. Hervé lived to a good old age, and before his death he adopted a little girl named Christine, who dwelt in a tiny hut near his own in the forest. The chief attributes of the blind singer in art are a frog and a wolf. He often appears, either alone or with other French Saints, being led along by his faithful companion, but occasionally the place of the wolf is taken by a fox, possibly because St. Hervé, as well as St. Junien, is credited with having rescued a chicken from a fox.

CHAPTER XXIX

ST. GREGORY THE GREAT

ST. GREGORY, justly surnamed the Great on account of all he did for the Church, was born at Rome about 540, the son of a Roman Senator, named Gordianus, who owned considerable estates in Italy and Sicily. The mother of the future Pope, whose name was Sylvia, was noted for her virtues, and, although she was never canonized, she is revered as a Saint by devout Catholics on account of her noble self-denying life. It is related that, before St. Gregory's birth, St. Antony of Thebes appeared to her, and told her that her child would one day be Pope. Whatever truth there may be in this, she brought up her boy to be an earnest Christian, but at the same time had him well educated in all secular learning. The young Gregory early attracted the attention of the Emperor Justin II., then feebly wielding the Imperial sceptre in Africa and Italy, and, when he was a little over thirty, he was made *Prætor*, or chief Magistrate, of Rome, an office for which he was well fitted

so far as knowledge and power of managing men was concerned, but the duties of which were altogether hostile to his tastes. He, therefore, very soon voluntarily resigned his high position, and withdrew to a monastery with the intention of renouncing the world altogether.

On his father's death St. Gregory became heir to a large property, but he spent all his patrimony in founding monasteries, six in Sicily, and one outside Rome, which he dedicated to St. Andrew, and which still exists as the Church of S. Gregorio Magno. The first Abbot of the Roman community was Hilarion, who was succeeded by Valentinus, and it was under the latter that St. Gregory himself took the monastic vows. He had been some little time a monk when the incident occurred which has been so variously told, and was long quoted as the cause of the introduction of Christianity to the British Isles, although, as has been seen, there were already many believers there. One day, when the young ascetic was transacting some business in the city for his monastery, he noticed several handsome young men with fair complexions awaiting purchasers in the slave market, and asked them where they came from. They replied from Britain, and he then enquired whether the people in their native land were converted to the true faith. Hearing that they were not, though it is very probable that his question was not understood, Gregory sighed deeply, and said to those standing by: 'How sad it is that the Prince of Darkness should be master of so much beauty and have such comely persons in his possession, and that so fine an exterior should have nothing of God's grace within.'

It seems a pity that St. Gregory did not then and there redeem the captives, instruct them in the faith, and send them home again with hearts so full of gratitude to him as to lead them to propagate his doctrine amongst their fellow countrymen. No such idea, however, entered his head, but he went to Benedict I., who was then Pope, and begged him to send teachers to Britain. The Head of the Church showed little interest in the matter, and, finding that no one was disposed to fall in with his views, St. Gregory resolved to go himself. He had actually started on his journey when he was recalled by the Pope; the people of Rome, by whom he was much beloved, having clamoured for his return, declaring that, in suffering

Gregory to go away, Benedict had destroyed Rome and incurred the anger of St. Peter. To make it impossible for the popular monk to slip off again, the Pope now appointed him one of the seven Regionary Deacons of Rome, and Gregory wisely decided to leave Britain alone for the present, but he never really relinquished his purpose, and some years after he himself had become Pope, he sent St. Augustine and forty other monks to the land of the fair-haired slaves, whose appearance had made so deep an impression upon him.

On the death of Benedict I., Pelagius II. succeeded him, and, struck by the tact with which St. Gregory had performed his duties as deacon, the new Pope sent him to Constantinople on a delicate mission to the Emperor Tiberius, who had risen from being a mere captain to supreme power in the East, and had acted as Regent during the insanity of Justin II. Tiberius, recognising in St. Gregory a kindred spirit, received him with all possible honour, and, during the three years of his residence at his Court, consulted him constantly on affairs of State. St. Gregory was recalled to Rome in 584, and for the next six years he led an austere life as Abbot of the monastery he had founded, acting also as secretary to the Pope, whose chief adviser he became. Many tales are told of his great severity as Abbot, how, for instance, he refused to allow any of his monks to attend the deathbed of one of their number named Justus, who had sinned against the rigid rule of poverty by hiding three pieces of gold in his cell. The unfortunate culprit died in an agony of remorse, and the stern ruler of the monastery ordered his body to be buried under a dunghill with the three ill-gotten pieces of money. As Justus had, however, been penitent at the last, the Abbot relented so far as to allow masses to be said for the repose of his soul, and it is related that on the 30th day after his death the spirit of Justus appeared to his brother, Copiosus, to assure him that after much torment he had won forgiveness in Heaven.

In 590, a terrible pestilence devastated Rome, in which Pope Pelagius was one of the first victims, and St. Gregory was chosen his successor by unanimous consent. True to his resolve to seek no honour in this world, the Abbot did all in his power to escape from the lofty position assigned to him, and even wrote a private letter to the Emperor Maurice, who had succeeded Tiberius in 582, entreating him not to ratify the

election. Some say the letter was intercepted by order of the Governor of Rome, another and quite different one signed by many influential citizens, being substituted for it. However that may be, the Emperor knew too well how fitted St. Gregory was for the post, and, if he ever received the appeal, he took no notice of it.

In the brief interval between the death of Pelagius II. and the accession of Gregory I. the plague continued to rage, and thousands died of it daily. Forgetting the peril in which he stood of becoming Pope against his will, St. Gregory worked hard amongst the dying and the dead, organizing processions and holding services day and night in the hope of turning aside the anger of Heaven. His efforts were rewarded, for one day when he was leading a procession in which an image of the Virgin Mary, supposed to have been the one now in S. Maria Maggiore, Rome, was carried, the archangel Michael, attended by a shining escort of angels, is said to have appeared above the Castello di S. Angelo. All who were privileged to behold the wondrous vision fell on their knees, the leader of the heavenly host sheathed his sword, and from that moment there were no more deaths from the plague. The remarkable occurrence made the people more eager than ever to secure as their spiritual ruler the man to whom they felt they owed their deliverance, but St. Gregory managed to elude the vigilance of those set to watch him, and was carried out of the city hidden in a basket by some travelling merchants, whom he had bribed. His retreat was, however, soon discovered; he was brought back in triumph, and, recognising that it was useless to resist longer, he gave his consent to his own election. He was consecrated on September 3rd, 590, and from that time until his death he ruled the Church with the greatest wisdom, taking the title of the 'Servant of the Servants of God,' and although on every occasion he maintained the dignity of his office, he continued to lead in private the simple, austere life of a monk. The victories he won were indeed spiritual rather than political, yet he left an indelible mark upon the history of his time.

Under the wise rule of St. Gregory slavery became illegal throughout Christendom; the long alienated kingdom of Spain was reconciled to the Church, and the British Isles were received into her communion. The ritual of the services was purified

and reorganized, and sacred music was systematized, the Gregorian chants still in use preserving the name of the great reformer. With the memory of Pope Gregory is also associated the institution of the celibacy of the clergy and the evolution of the doctrine of purgatory, which, if he did not exactly originate, he was certainly the first to preach. His charity was, in fact, so boundless that he extended it beyond the grave, unable to believe that a merciful God could allow any one of his creatures to perish eternally. If through any unfortunate oversight on the part of his agents a beggar died of want in Rome, St. Gregory used to put on sackcloth and excommunicate himself for some days, and if any of the souls of which he, as head of the Church, considered himself the shepherd, passed from life with sins unforgiven, he ceased not to pray for them until he was assured of their salvation. The keynote of his life as Abbot had been severity, that of his life as Pope was mercy, and in the course of his wonderful career he was never ashamed to own the inconsistency which is really often the truest consistency. He died on March 12, 604, after a long illness caused, it is supposed, by excessive fasting, and was buried in the Basilica of S. Pietro in Vaticano, then very much what it was in the time of Constantine.

The various legends which have gathered about the memory of St. Gregory are all significant of the beauty of his character, and the deep veneration with which he has ever been regarded by the Church. It was generally supposed in his lifetime that he was constantly attended in his study by a dove, which used to perch on his shoulder whilst he was writing. Indeed, his secretary, John the Deacon, declared that one day he actually saw this dove when he peeped unobserved into his master's room.

Still more beautiful and significant is the story of a supper given by St. Gregory in his convent of St. Andrew to a number of poor men, at which an uninvited guest appeared. Before this supper took place a certain beggar had come again and again to the gate of the monastery asking for alms, and the generous Abbot had at last given him all his private property, even a silver soup bowl which had been a present from his beloved mother, Sylvia. Surprised at finding thirteen instead of twelve visitors awaiting him when he came into the refectory, St. Gregory sent for the monk who acted as his



[Municipio Recanati

THE MADONNA AND CHILD, WITH SAINTS GREGORY
AND URBAN

CENTRAL PANEL OF ALTAR-PIECE

By Lorenzo Lotto

steward, and asked him why he had bidden so many, to which the man replied, ‘ Holy father, there are surely twelve only !’

Realizing from the blindness of the monk that there was some mystery in the matter, the Abbot said nothing more then, but when the meal was over he asked the thirteenth guest to come with him to his private room. When the two were alone together a strange awe fell upon St. Gregory, and it was with a trembling voice that he said to his visitor, ‘ Who art thou ?’ The reply justified his presentiment, for the guest replied, ‘ I am the poor man to whom thou didst give so many alms ; My name is Wonderful, and, through Me, thou shalt obtain whatever thou dost ask of God.’ Then the Abbot knew that it was Christ Himself who had deigned to appear in the guise of a pilgrim, and would gladly have learnt more from His lips, but even as he was about to address Him, the figure faded away and St. Gregory found himself alone.

Still more remarkable is the legendary story of the apparition of Christ to St. Gregory one day when he was celebrating mass, and there was present amongst the congregation a man who did not believe in the Real Presence, who was looking on at the sacred ceremony with an expression of scorn upon his face. The holy Pope knew of his scepticism, and prayed earnestly that some sign might be given which would convince the doubter that the Lord Himself was truly with them. As he ended his petition St. Gregory looked up and beheld the crucified Redeemer standing upon the altar, surrounded by the instruments of His passion. The scoffer was converted, and was henceforth devoted to the service of Christ, winning many others to share his belief.

On another occasion a miracle is said to have been performed by St. Gregory, with a view to getting his own way in an argument with the Empress Constantia, who had asked him to let her have a portion of the relics of Saints Peter and Paul, the greatest treasures owned by the Church of Rome. The Pope declared that, even for her, he could not disturb the sacred remains, but he sent her instead a brandeum or winding-sheet, in which the body of St. John the Evangelist had been wrapped before his translation to Heaven. The Empress was not unnaturally displeased, and she returned the gift with a message to the effect that she cared nothing for it. St. Gregory then sum-

moned all his clergy to attend him in St. Peter's, laid the despised brandeum upon the altar, and, after praying earnestly for aid from God, he took a knife with which he made a slash in the cloth. To the intense astonishment of all present blood flowed from the rent as if from a wound in a living body, thus proving of what great value was everything which had come in contact with the remains of a Saint. Whether the Empress accepted the brandeum after this, the story does not say, but the effect on those who witnessed the miracle was of course very great.

Another quaint legend, immortalized by Dante, the evolution of which may be traced to the preaching by St. Gregory of the doctrine of purgatory, is that of the release through the prayers of the Pope, of the soul of Trajan from the intermediate state. During the life of Trajan, it is said, a poor widow had once stopped him on the way to battle to demand vengeance for the death of her boy, who had been slain by the son of the Emperor. Trajan replied that he would inquire into the matter when he got back from the war, at which the woman cried, 'But if thou shouldst be killed, who would then do me justice?' 'My successor,' replied Trajan, and the importunate widow answered: 'But would it not be better that thou shouldst do this good action thyself rather than leave it for another?' Then the Emperor was touched, bade the woman take his son instead of her own, and bestowed a rich dowry upon her. Whether the young Prince fell in with this strange arrangement or not is not known, but when Trajan died his soul was received in purgatory, and there it still was when St. Gregory the Great became Pope, five hundred years later. Truly a long penance for one who had ruled his dominions justly and well, and whose persecution of the Christians had been the result of a mistaken judgment as to the danger of their religion to the State, not of any depravity of character. In any case, the Pope was greatly troubled in his mind with regard to Trajan, and one day, remembering the incident of the widow's petition, he prayed fervently that the soul of the Emperor might be released from torment. As he still knelt, he heard a voice from heaven telling him that his prayer was heard, and the soul of Trajan was admitted to heaven; but the boon must be purchased by one of two things: St. Gregory must himself endure two days of purgatory after death, or for

the rest of his life on earth be sick and infirm. He chose the latter, and was sustained in his vicarious suffering by the thought of the good work he had done.

St. Gregory the Great is the patron Saint of Catholic England, in recognition of the interest he took in the conversion of Britain, and he is said to be the special protector of choristers, on account of the improvement he brought about in Church music. The plain chants in use in the Western Church are still called Gregorian in memory of him, and by a natural transition he gradually became looked upon as the protector of all students, because in olden times the cathedral schools, in which choristers were trained by masters chosen by the Chapter, were the only places of education for Catholic boys.

St. Gregory, who is said to have been tall and stout, with a dark complexion, short black hair and very little beard, is generally represented in pontifical robes, wearing the tiara and holding the crosier in his right hand. He shares with the other Latin Fathers the emblems of the book and the pen, and, with St. Augustine, that of the dove, but in his case the symbolic bird is generally hovering beside him, as in the painting by Sacchi already referred to.* In some old calendars March 12, the day sacred to St. Gregory, is marked with a tiara, and with it is sometimes associated a bird, with a slight resemblance to a dove. Occasionally St. Gregory holds a church, in memory of his papal dignity, or a scroll, on which is inscribed 'Ora pro nobis Deum,' in commemoration of the staying of the plague in Rome through the intercession of the Blessed Virgin. Sometimes, for the same reason, an image of the Madonna is associated with the great Pope, or an angel stands beside him with an uplifted sword, whilst the reform he brought about in Church music is hinted at by the introduction at his feet of a few sheets of music with the old notation, which was quite unlike that now in use.

In the church named after him in Rome, occupying the site of his monastery of St. Andrew, is enshrined a small room, said to be still exactly what it was in St. Gregory's old home; above one of the altars is preserved the Madonna, which the Abbot is supposed to have had carried in procession during the plague, and in the chapel of St. Barbara is the marble table at which, according to tradition, he entertained

* See *ante*, p. 142.

the thirteen guests, of whom one was Christ Himself. In the same chapel is a fine seated figure of St. Gregory, supposed to have been begun by Michael Angelo and completed by Cordieri, and above the altar of the chapel of S. Andrea is an oil painting by Roncalli of the Virgin and Child, with St. Andrew on one side and St. Gregory on the other, both of which are, however, inferior to the half-length bas-relief, by Luca della Robbia, in the church of the Ognisanti at Florence.

The Cathedral of Siena owns a Statue of the great Pope, attributed to Michael Angelo, and there is a fairly satisfactory one, by Laboureur, in S. Paolo fuori le Mura, Rome. A very fine interpretation of the character of St. Gregory is the oil painting by Rubens in S. Maria in Vallicella, Rome, in which he is associated with Saints Maurus and Papias, and Fra Angelico has introduced him in the celebrated frescoes on the vaulting of the Chapel of Nicolas V. in the Vatican. He appears also in the 'Paradiso' of Tintoretto; in the beautiful 'Madonna with Saints' of the Coro delle Monache or Choir of the Nuns in S. Zaccaria, Venice, attributed by some to Palma Vecchio, and others to Lorenzo Lotto; in the 'Vision of St. John,' by Correggio, he is grouped with St. Mark, and his dove is apparently whispering in his ear; and in the Altar-piece by Lorenzo Lotto, now in the Recanata Municipio, he stands opposite to St. Urban on one side of the Enthroned Madonna, holding his crosier in his right hand, and in his left a book bearing the portraits of two haloed Saints. St. Gregory is also one of the six Saints added by Perugino to Raphael's fresco of the Holy Trinity in S. Severo, Perugia, and there is a good representation of him, by Mantegna, on one of the wings of the great Altar-piece in S. Zeno Maggiore, Verona.

In his 'Caractéristiques des Saints,' Père Cahier reproduces a very quaint engraving, dating probably from about the fourteenth century, of the 'Mass of St. Gregory,' in which the Pope, attended by two deacons, is kneeling on the steps of the altar, on which are the chalice, the open book of the Gospel, and the tiara, whilst above the Saviour is seen standing in an open tomb, His head drooping, and His nail-pierced hands folded across each other. Behind Him is His cross, and round about Him are the various minor instruments of His Passion: the spear, the sponge, the nails, etc., the lantern, symbolic of the agony in the garden, the cock, in



Anderson photo]

THE HOLY TRINITY, WITH ST. GREGORY AND OTHER SAINTS

By Raphael and Perugino

[*San Severo, Perugia*

To face p. 298

memory of St. Peter's denial, and the purse, emblematic of the treachery of Judas. This naïve rendering of the legend became accepted, as time went on, as so thoroughly characteristic of St. Gregory and his teaching with regard to the Holy Eucharist, that it was adopted as their distinctive seal by the Franciscans of the Philippine Islands, to which the name of the 'Province of St. Gregory' was given. In various incunabula and manuscript Books of Hours, certain prayers have been associated with this picture called 'Orationes Sancti Gregorii,' such as that beginning 'O Domine Jesu Christe, adoro te in cruce pendentem et cronom spineam in capite portantem,'* and special indulgences were at one time granted to those who recited them. The 'Mass of St. Gregory' is also the subject of a bas-relief in the chapel of the church dedicated to the great Pope at Rome, and of a well-known engraving by Albert Dürer, remarkable for its combined reverence of feeling and crude realism, whilst the extraordinary incident there depicted, is alluded to in the sixteenth century Breviary of Passau in one of the Vesper responses of the Office of St. Gregory :

'Vere felicem præsulem
Vere fidei doctorem ;
Quo petente, panis Christi
Formam accepit digiti ;
Ad firmandam plebis fidem
Versus incurrentam carnem.'†

The Miracle of the Brandeum has been represented by Andrea Sacchi, in a painting now in the Vatican Gallery, and the Supper of St. Gregory is the subject of a grand composition by Paolo Veronese in the refectory of the old monastery of Monte Berico at Vicenza, in which the uninvited Guest, distinguished by the beauty of His face and His dignified bearing, is seated at the table with the rest of the pilgrims. In a fresco of the same theme in S. Gregorio Magno, Rome,

* 'O Lord Jesus Christ, I adore Thee, as Thou hangest on the cross,
bearing on Thy head the crown of thorns.'

† 'Most happy Pontiff,
True Teacher of the Faith !
At whose prayer the Bread
The form of Christ did take
In the unbloody sacrifice,
The faith of the people to confirm.'

the thirteenth figure is a winged angel; in a painting by Giorgio Vasari in the Bologna Gallery, the heavenly Apparition has the well-known features of the Redeemer, the Pope is a portrait of Clement VII., and the pilgrim guests are lost in a crowd of personages wearing the costumes in vogue in the artist's time.

In the same gallery is a quaint painting, by an unknown hand, of St. Gregory writing in his study, with the dove close to his ear; and in the Vatican Gallery is a representation of the future Pope leading a procession along the streets of Rome, with the Castello di S. Angelo in the distance, but, strange to say, the grand subject of the Rescue of Rome from the plague has not been chosen by any of the great masters.

The 'Release of the soul of Trajan' is represented in bas-relief on one of the capitals of the pillars in the Doge's Palace, Venice; in the Town Hall of Ceneda, near Belluna, are three frescoes ascribed to one of the Amalteo brothers, of celebrated 'Judgements,' one of which is that of Trajan; and in the Town Hall of Brescia the same theme is one of a series of eight 'Judgments.' The story of the monk who hid the money, is the subject of a marble bas-relief in the Church of S. Gregorio, Rome, and in the series of frescoes by Domenico Ghirlandajo in the chapel of S. Fina at S. Gemignano, the Pope is represented consoling, on her deathbed, the maiden Saint, who lived in the thirteenth century.*

CHAPTER XXX

SOME GREAT CHURCHMEN OF THE SIXTH CENTURY

Two Popes who, in the sixth century, won the honour of martyrdom for their zeal in opposing the encroachments of the civil power were Saints John I. and Silverius. The former, who succeeded Pope Hormisdas in the See of Rome in 523, was thrown into prison by Theodoric, the Arian King of the Goths, because of his failure in a mission on which he had been sent

* The Story of St. Fina is related in Vol. III. of the 'Saints in Christian Art.'

to the Emperor Justin at Constantinople. The holy man died of privation in his dungeon at Ravenna, for which reason he is generally represented with chains or fetters in his hand, and he was buried in the Basilica of the Vatican, where his remains are still honoured.

The fate of Pope Silverius, who was elected in 536, resembled greatly that of St. John. He became engaged in a controversy with the Empress Theodora, who, after trying in vain to bring about his deposition, had him impeached for high treason. Amongst other absurd charges brought against the Pope, he was accused of corresponding with the enemy when Rome was besieged by the Goths. He took refuge in S. Sabina, but by a stratagem he was induced to go to the Palace of General Belisarius, where he was stripped of his pontifical robes and compelled to put on those of a monk. It was then given out in the city that the Pope had voluntarily resigned his see, and he was sent to Patara, in Lycia, where he remained till he died, some say of starvation, others of a broken heart.

The usual attributes in art of St. Silverius are the triangle, or emblem of the Trinity, given as a general rule to those who opposed the Arian heresy, and a church held in his hand, in allusion to his steadfast defence of the faith, and his refusal, in spite of the wishes of the Empress Theodora, to induct the heretic Bishop Anthimus to the See of Constantinople. The persecuted Pope is sometimes represented wearing the robes and with the staff of a pilgrim, in allusion to his banishment, and in certain old engravings he holds a kind of paten or bowl, containing a small loaf of bread, possibly to symbolize the scanty food supplied to him in his exile.

Of the many Bishops of the sixth century who have won the honour of canonization, none is more celebrated than St. David of Wales, who is to his fellow-countrymen what St. George is to the English and St. Denis to the French. As Father David, or Sir David, he is the hero of as many wonderful adventures as King Arthur, who, according to some authorities, was his nephew.

St. David of Wales was the son of Sandde, a chief of Cardiganshire, and St. Nun, or Non, and spent his childhood in the district now named after him, but then known as the Old Bush, of which the Latin form was Vetus Menevia. He

was dedicated as a boy to the service of God, and, after studying for some time in the monastery school of St. Illtyd, he became the chosen companion of a learned man named Paulinus, who dwelt in the Isle of Wight, and whose sight he is said to have restored by making the sign of the cross over his eyes.

On leaving Paulinus the young enthusiast is supposed to have gone to Glastonbury, where he built a chapel, and some are of opinion that he also visited Jerusalem, where he was consecrated priest by the Patriarch of that city. It seems more likely that, if he did go to the Holy Land, it was only to pray with other pilgrims at the scenes of the Lord's Passion, and thus prepare himself for the life he had chosen. In any case, it is certain that he was the Abbot-Bishop of an important monastery in Wales when he was summoned to the famous Synod convened by Dubricius, Bishop of Llandaff, at the place now known as Llandewi Brevi, which signifies the Church of David the Bellower, a name memorializing a remarkable occurrence said to have taken place at the great gathering of clergy. The people, relate certain old chroniclers, had come in their thousands to the meeting to listen to what their pastors should say to them, but not one of those who rose up to speak could make his voice heard. At last Paulinus, the old friend of St. David, advised that his pupil should be sent for, and messengers were despatched to fetch him. At first St. David refused to go, but in the end he consented, and his arrival was hailed with the greatest joy by all present. He was asked to stand on an improvised platform made of a pile of the outer garments of the audience, but he said he preferred the flat ground. As he commenced to speak a strange miracle was performed, for the ground rose up until it became a lofty hill, from which the preacher could look round upon the vast crowds extending as far as the eye could reach. Then a beautiful white dove, the token of Divine inspiration, swept down from heaven to alight on his shoulder, and from his lips poured forth a passionate appeal, every single word of which fell with the greatest distinctness upon the ears of all. The sermon over, St. David was, continues the narrative, by the consent of all Churchmen and laymen alike, 'constituted Archbishop, whilst his city was consecrated the metropolis of all the country.' Henceforth he was known as the Archbishop of Caerleon,

although he does not seem to have exercised any authority over other prelates.

The rest of the life of St. David is involved in great obscurity, but he appears to have ruled over his new see with great energy, though he resided chiefly at his old monastery at Menevia. Many councils were convened, many churches founded, by him, and the constant occurrence in Wales of the name of David, Davy, or Davison, prove how deeply rooted is the affection for him of his fellow countrymen. Patriotic Welshmen claim that it was the beloved Bishop who gave to Wales the strange national emblem of the leek, for on a day when King Arthur won a fresh victory over the Saxons, St. David had told his nephew's soldiers to place a leek in their caps.

When and where St. David died is not known, but he is supposed to have lived to a great age, and to have been taken ill at last just after he had administered the holy communion in one of his own churches. He managed, however, to give the blessing as usual, and then, in a feeble voice, he added the following touching words of farewell : ‘ Brothers and sisters, be joyful and keep your faith, and do the same things which you have heard and seen with me, and I will go the road our fathers have travelled. Be courageous whilst you are on earth, for you will not any more see me in this world.’ Two days afterwards the Archbishop died, and was reverently interred in the city named after him, in the presence of vast multitudes of mourners.

St. David is generally represented standing on the hill miraculously raised for him, addressing listening crowds, and with the dove on his shoulder. More rarely he is alone, and several fountains of water are springing up near him, in allusion, say some, to his having more than once saved his people in times of drought, whilst others see an allusion to the number of churches founded by the Archbishop, for the supply of the living water of the Word of God. A harp is sometimes held by St. David in memory of his love of music and encouragement of Welsh minstrels, and a leek, worn in his honour on his fête day, March 1, is of course his special attribute.

Celebrated Celtic contemporaries of St. David of Wales who have been more or less frequently represented in art were Saints Brandan or Brendon, of Clonfert; Columba, of Iona; and Kentigern, or Mungo, of Glasgow. Of St. Brandan a very

romantic story is told to the effect that, in a seven years' voyage, he landed at many different places, including the Canary Islands and a certain fair land which has never been identified, called in the legend the 'Paradise of Birds,' on every tree of which were many birds of snow-white plumage, who showed no fear of the intruders, 'but sang so merrily that it was a heavenly noise to hear.' The Saint, who was gifted with the power of understanding the language of birds, asked one of them to tell him why there were so many on this island, and why they sang so sweetly, receiving the astonishing reply: 'We were once angels in heaven, but when our master, Lucifer, fell, through his lofty pride, we for our offences fell with him, but, as our sin was not great, our Lord sent us here, out of all pain, to serve and praise Him as best we can.'

Touched at this proof of the merciful goodness of the All-Father, St. Brandan and his followers left the metamorphosed angels unmolested, but on the anniversary of their first visit, which had taken place on Easter day, they returned to give glory to God and keep the Feast of the Resurrection with the birds.

Still more full of romantic beauty is the story of the meeting of St. Brandan with Judas Iscariot, described in the well-known poem of Matthew Arnold, when the doomed traitor confided to the holy man that he was allowed an occasional respite from the pains of hell, because of one good deed he had done on earth. This deed was the giving of a cloak to a leper, or, according to another version, the setting of a stone, the very one on which he was floating on the ocean when St. Brandon came across him, 'on a bad piece of road, where it did much ease to passers-by.' As St. Brandan was listening to the mournful tale of the doleful ghost, and marvelling at the Lord's sweet mercy, the evil fiends of hell came to drag the sinner back to torment, but, in answer to the passionate appeal of Judas, St. Brandan, in the power of the Holy Name of Jesus, drove them away. After many other strange adventures, St. Brandan returned to his native land, where he founded several important monasteries, dying at a good old age, surrounded by loving friends. His memory is held sacred, not only in Ireland, but in the whole of the British Isles, and his name is preserved in many parishes, including that of Brendon in Devonshire, and Brancepeth, which is supposed to mean Brandan's valley, in Durham.

Of St. Columba of Iona, justly called the Apostle of Scotland, who ranks in Ireland with Saints Patrick and Bridget amongst the best-loved of her many Saints, far more is known than of St. Brandan, for his life was written by one of his successors, the Abbot Adamnan, who spared no pains to collect every detail respecting the hero of his narrative.

The son of noble, some say of royal, parents, St. Columba was born at Gartan, in Tyrconnel, and had already founded many monasteries in his native land—including that of Derry, later known as Londonderry—before, owing to a quarrel with King Diarmid, then Overlord of Ireland, he resolved to transfer his work to Scotland. It is said that in this quarrel Columba showed himself anything but a Saint, for he led his kinsmen in person to the field, and sanctioned a great deal of unnecessary bloodshed, in revenge for what would appear to have been, after all, a trifling offence. The story goes that St. Columba, who was a great lover of literature, had copied with his own hand a beautiful Psalter in a monastery at which he was stopping, but that, when he was going to take his manuscript away with him, the Abbot claimed it as his own property, because it had been produced in his monastery. St. Columba referred the dispute to King Diarmid, who decided against him, saying laconically: ‘To every cow her calf.’

In the civil war which resulted from this incident, the copy of the Psalter is supposed to have been recovered, and the Academy of Dublin claims to own it still. However that may be, public opinion was outraged at the time by the terrible revenge taken by one who had vowed himself to the service of the Cross. A council of the Church was summoned, and at it Columba was excommunicated. The pleading of some of his friends, however, led to the remission of this terrible sentence, and in the end it was altered to banishment from Ireland. The offender was told to go forth and win as many men to Christ as he had caused to perish in battle. Conscience-stricken and miserable, the once proud Abbot obeyed, and, accompanied by a few of his monks, he left his beloved native land for ever, and went first to the little island now known as Iona, of which the original name was I-colm-Kill, or the Island of Columb, the monk. Here he was soon joined by so many eager to follow his example, that he had to plant other colonies on the mainland. In course of

time he is said to have founded as many as 300 monasteries in Scotland and its islands, spending much of his time on the sea, and winning almost as great a reputation for skilful steering as he did for preaching the Gospel, for which reason the boatmen and fisher-folk of Scotland and Ireland still call on him for protection in storms.

For thirty years St. Columba ruled wisely and well the scattered communities he had founded from his retreat at Iona, where he spent much of his time in prayer, and in making copies of the scriptures, a work in which he always delighted. In the lonely oratory, to which he often withdrew to commune with his own heart, he is said to have been often visited by angels, and one of his monks, who ventured to intrude on his solitude, declared that he had found him surrounded by a number of heavenly visitants, whose presence shed a glory about his cell.

When St. Columba felt death approaching, he went to kneel at the altar in his little chapel, and there he was found by some of his monks, who, tenderly supporting him in their arms, entreated him to bless them once more. The poor old man could not speak, but he smiled at them, and feebly moved his hand in the gesture of benediction, passing peacefully away the next moment. He was buried at first in Iona, but later his remains were translated to Down, in Ulster, and laid beside those of his fellow missionaries, Saints Patrick and Bridget. His memory is still held sacred in the whole of the British Isles, even in districts far removed from his influence during his lifetime, for amongst the men he won to Christ in expiation of the crime of his youth, were many who later became, in their turn, famous missionaries.

It is related that when King Oswald was asleep in his tent, on the eve of the battle which won him his succession to the throne,* the holy Abbot of Iona appeared to him, and stretched out his arms over him, as if to bless him, and for this reason the two Saints are sometimes grouped together in art. St. Columba appears occasionally amongst other early British Bishops in English ecclesiastical decoration, notably in the great south window of Lichfield Cathedral, and in France he is sometimes grouped, as in the clerestory windows of Chartres Cathedral, with so notable a French Saint as St. Hilary of Poitiers.

* See 'The Saints in Christian Art,' Vol. III., Chap. II.]

The 'Mission of St. Columba to the Picts' is the subject of one of the fine mural paintings by William Hole in the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

The life story of St. Kentigern, whose nickname of Mungo, or the dearly-beloved, has almost superseded his own, is one long romance from beginning to end. His mother, after whom the Scotch village of St. Enoch, near Glasgow, is named, is said to have been courted by a princely lover, who, when she refused to be his wife, carried her off by force. Before the birth of their child, however, he grew tired of his unwilling captive, and sent her away to meet her trouble as best she could. In accordance with a cruel custom, the poor girl was placed in an open boat and cast adrift upon the North Sea, with none to help her in her approaching illness. The frail craft drifted up the Firth of Forth, and the lonely maiden landed on the beach. Fortunately for her, some shepherds had left a smouldering fire in a sheltered nook of a wood hard by, and there the future St. Kentigern was born. Not long afterwards the shepherds returned, and ministered kindly to the wants of the mother and child. Unable to remain with them, however, they took them to a holy hermit named Serf, who received them gladly, and baptized them both, giving to the fatherless infant the significant name of Kentigern, which means chief or lord. St. Enoch seems to have died soon afterwards, for no more is told of her, but Kentigern lived with Serf, or Servan as he is sometimes called, for many years, learning with a number of other boys, who came to the hermit to be taught. These boys were from the first jealous of the old man's darling, and often tried to get him into disgrace. One day some of them killed a pet robin belonging to their master, and laid the blame on Kentigern, who was sent for by Serf to be punished. When Kentigern saw the dead bird in the hand of his foster-father he wept bitterly, and said, 'How could you believe that I would do so cruel a thing as kill your favourite? Give it to me, and I will prove that I am innocent.' Sorrowfully the hermit handed the robin to the boy, who, stroking it tenderly, prayed earnestly to God to help him. As he prayed the bird began to stir, and presently it flew out of the hand of the boy to the shoulder of Serf, who severely punished those who had falsely accused his favourite. The touching incident was never forgotten, and in memory of it a robin later became included

in the arms of the city of Glasgow, of which St. Kentigern is the patron.

When he had taught his beloved pupil all he could, the hermit sent Kentigern forth as a missionary, and wherever he went he won many to Christ. He made the site of the present Glasgow his headquarters, where the way had already been paved for him by St. Ninian, the apostle of the Picts, who, strange to say, in spite of the veneration in which he is justly held, has no special attributes in art, and is rarely introduced in ecclesiastical decoration. At Glasgow, or Glasglin, which means the place of the dear friends, many eager disciples gathered about St. Kentigern, and the little settlement soon became the centre of a wide-spread activity. Before he was twenty-five years old the young missionary had been consecrated Bishop of what had become a vast see, and in the next few years he sent his disciples as far as North Wales to found other communities. Wherever he went himself, he met with ready help, not only from his fellow-men, but from all God's creatures, and many quaint stories are told of his intercourse with the wild denizens of the forests. Once, when he was seeking a new site on which to build, a boar trotted out of a thicket and acted as guide. On another occasion, when the horses broke down that were dragging the stone for some church or monastery the Saint was erecting, their places were taken by stags, who came at the call of St. Kentigern to place themselves in the shafts. Still more wonderful was the miracle when a wolf, which had killed one of the stags, meekly took the place of its victim by command of the all-powerful Bishop, a quaint incident which has been interpreted as a fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, 'The wolf shall dwell with the lamb,' etc.

Unlike his great contemporary, St. Columba, St. Kentigern never allowed himself to be drawn into the fierce civil strife which in his lifetime did so much to hinder the spread of Christianity in Scotland, but he was often present at the councils of the chiefs, and more than once he reconciled the combatants on the very eve of battle. He is said to have restored reason to a certain bard named Merlin, who had gone mad after a great battle, in which his master had been worsted, and to have saved a young married woman, who had dropped her wedding ring into the Clyde, from the anger of her husband, by telling a salmon which had swallowed it to restore

it to its owner. In a word, there was absolutely no limit to the supposed powers of the Saint during his lifetime, and even after his death he was still held to be, like the Master he had served so well on earth, 'a very present help in trouble.' Not long before the end of his useful career, St. Kentigern is said to have gone to Iona to visit St. Columba, and to have been greeted by the latter with the glowing words: 'I see a fiery pillow, like a golden crown starred with gems, descending on thy head.' The two holy men spent a few happy days together, in what the old chronicler of the meeting calls 'heart to heart communion in holy things,' and when they parted they exchanged crosiers, St. Kentigern giving his rough, wooden staff to St. Columba, and receiving instead the richly-ornamented badge of office which the Abbot of Iona had been in the habit of using, and which St. Mungo is represented as holding in the fine seated statue, recently executed by George Frampton, R.A. A year after the visit to Iona, St. Kentigern died in the presence of many of his disciples, his last words, 'The will of the Lord be done,' summing up what had been the guiding principle of his long career; unfailing obedience to the Divine will.

On account of the various incidents of the legend related above, the special attributes of St. Kentigern are a robin, a deer, a wolf or bear, and a fish. He is, of course, a prominent figure in Scotch ecclesiastical decoration, and his name is preserved not only in the Cathedral of St. Mungo at Glasgow, and many other dedications in his native land, but also in numerous churches south of the Tweed, especially in Cumberland and North Wales. In the stained-glass windows of the Cumberland church of Crossthwaite—so called after the cross in the thwaite or road which used to mark the spot where the Bishop stood to preach—various scenes from his life are given; and in those of the church at Bromfield in the same county St. Kentigern is represented as a very old man, the head having been reproduced from a seal preserved in the British Museum.

A very celebrated contemporary of the early Apostles of the British Isles was St. Eleutherius of Tournay, of whom many quaintly significant legends are told. Of noble birth, he was brought up by St. Medardus, and elected Bishop of Tournay after the banishment of his predecessor, Theodore, who was

living in concealment at the little village of Blandain. The new Bishop had an arduous task to perform, for the greater number of his people were heathens at heart, and it was not until a remarkable miracle had been performed by him that he obtained any influence over them at all. The story goes that the daughter of the Governor of Tournay fell in love with St. Eleutherius, and went to him to tell him of her devotion. The holy man already knew her secret, and reproved her so sternly that she fell down dead at his feet. Her father, in terrible distress, went to the Bishop, and entreated him to restore his child to life, promising that if he did the whole Court would believe in the God of the Christians. St. Eleutherius said he would do his best, and, after several days of fasting and prayer, he went to the grave of the poor girl, followed by an immense concourse of people. In the presence of them all, he bade her arise, and she obeyed, coming forth from the tomb uninjured. She and her father were baptized then and there, but the troubles of the Bishop were not yet over, for a plague broke out in the city soon afterwards, to which hundreds fell victims. The Bishop was said to be the cause, and, in spite of his high rank, he was tried for the crime and condemned. After being scourged, he was shut up in prison, but an angel of God came in the night and set him free. He then joined Bishop Theodore at Blandain, where he remained in concealment for some little time. In the end, however, he was recalled to Tournay, the Governor having repented of his wickedness in sanctioning his imprisonment.

In the course of the next few years, the eloquent preaching of St. Eleutherius completely changed the state of things in his see. From being a stronghold of the heathen it became a thoroughly Christian city. The Bishop is even said to have refused to allow King Clovis to enter the Cathedral when he was passing through Tournay, declaring that an unconfessed crime unfitted him for worship in the house of God. The King at first denied the accusation, but in the end he owned his guilt, received absolution, and was admitted to the holy table. It is related further that as St. Eleutherius was celebrating Mass in the presence of Clovis and all his courtiers, an angel appeared and presented the Bishop with a scroll on which the pardon of the royal offender was inscribed. In the end, St. Eleutherius was murdered, some say by the

heathen who still held out against his influence, others by some heretics he had offended. In any case, it is certain that he was waylaid as he was leaving a council he had convened, and wounded in the head with a sword. He managed to escape from his assailants to Blandain, where he died five weeks later, after great suffering. He was buried in the village, but his remains were translated to Tournay in the nineteenth century, and now rest in the cathedral in a beautiful reliquary, on which is a very fine bas-relief statue, representing the Bishop in his episcopal robes, holding his crosier in one hand and a model of the cathedral, of which he is accounted the founder, in the other, whilst his feet rest upon a dragon, in allusion to the long conflict he waged with the powers of evil.

In addition to the church and the dragon, the scourge is sometimes given to St. Eleutherius, in memory of his sufferings or in token of his severity to the heathen, and the day of the translation of his remains to Tournay is still held as one of penitence in the diocese. The incident of the refusal to admit King Clovis to the cathedral and the apparition of the angel bearing his pardon on the scroll, are occasionally represented in old pictures and engravings, but now and then the message from above is merely typified by a hand issuing from a cloud above the head of the Bishop. It must be added, however, that many authorities assign the story of the scroll to St. Giles and the Emperor Charlemagne, not to St. Eleutherius and King Clovis. In the Cathedral of Tournay are preserved a beautiful series of fifteenth century arras tapestries, representing scenes from the life of the great Bishop, and he is often introduced in the stained-glass windows of Belgium and France, notably in one in the Church of St. Aignan at Chartres, where he is grouped with St. Rusticus.

The friend and teacher of St. Eleutherius, St. Medardus, though already Bishop of Noyon, was chosen to succeed him in the See of Tournay, and may be said to have completed the work begun by his pupil. Although his father held a high position at Court, it was the duty of St. Medardus when he was a boy to look after the horses on the country estate, and it is related that on one occasion, when he had given a colt away in charity, the number was miraculously made up at the end of the day. For this reason one of the Bishop's characteristics in art is a horse or a number of foals, and in Picardy the peasants

still say, when it rains on his fête day, June 8, that it is to water the horses of St. Medardus. The miracle of the horse was but the first of many wonders which are said to have marked the career of the Saint. When he was caught in a storm he was protected by an eagle with outspread wings; he left the imprint of his foot on a stone when it was important that his presence in a certain place at a certain time should be proved; he rescued many captives and prisoners, their chains falling off and the doors of their dungeons flying open at a word from him; he could cure the toothache with a touch of his fingers; and when he died, after a long course of usefulness, his room was filled with a celestial glory, in the midst of which appeared two gleaming white doves to receive his soul.

As related in the life of St. Radegund,* it was St. Medardus who married her to King Clotaire, gave her the veil when she fled from Court after the murder of her brother, and intervened on her behalf when her husband would fain have compelled her to return to him against her will. When St. Medardus was dying, King Clotaire came to beg him to bless him before the end, and it was, it is said, due to solemn words spoken by the Bishop, that the royal penitent turned from his evil ways.

In all his work for the good of his people, St. Medardus was aided by the co-operation of St. Gildard, of Rouen, who is said to have been his twin brother, and is often grouped with him in stained-glass windows, and elsewhere. The two were buried together in the church named after St. Medardus at Tournay, and are commemorated on the same day.

St. Medardus of Noyon and Tournay may be recognised amongst other French Bishops by his half-open mouth, showing his excellent white teeth, a quaint memorial of his fame as the curer of toothache, and a peculiarity which has given rise to the expression, 'the smile of St. Medard,' to signify an air of assumed cheerfulness. A torch and a dove, both in allusion to the supernatural phenomena at his death, and a child clinging to his robes, are also characteristics of St. Medardus, the last probably in memory of his intervention on behalf of prisoners. The vine dressers of Belgium and France appeal to the Bishop for aid, because, it is suggested, if it rains on his fête day, several days of wet weather are sure to follow, which is good for the

* See *ante*, pp. 265, 269.

vintage. For some unexplained reason, St. Medardus is also supposed to look after the interests of brewers.

Another famous French Bishop was St. Honoré of Amiens, whose memory is kept alive by the remarkable sculptures of the southern doorway of the cathedral, known as the *Portail de la Vierge Dorée*, a statue of the Blessed Virgin having replaced that of the Bishop, which now adorns the Northern entrance. St. Honoré was born at Pont-en-Ponthieu, and, having in due course become a priest, he won such fame by his piety and eloquence that, when the See of Amiens became vacant, he was unanimously chosen Bishop, in spite of his most earnest protestations of his unworthiness. It is related that, when he tried to escape, the holy oil of consecration fell upon his head from heaven, thus compelling him to recognise that his election was in accordance with the Divine will. The first time the new Bishop performed Mass in the Church of St. Acheul, which was then the cathedral, a hand was seen blessing the chalice and the bread, a miracle commemorated in the arms of the Abbey of St. Acheul, which include a silver hand issuing from a cloud.

It was during the episcopate of St. Honoré that the remains of the martyrs Fuscienus, Victoricus, and Gentianus* were discovered at Sains, six miles from Amiens, by a priest named Sulpicien, who, it is said, raised a song of thanksgiving, which was heard by the Bishop as he was celebrating Mass. The news of the remarkable incident of course spread far and near, and many were the eager claimants for the possession of the holy relics. King Childebert sent orders that they were to be removed to Paris, but, when an attempt was made to obey the royal mandate, the bodies became so heavy it was found impossible to remove them. This was interpreted to mean that they were to be interred in the Cathedral of Amiens, and they were, therefore, taken to that building with great pomp and ceremony. As the solemn procession entered the western doorway, passing beneath the crucifix above it, the figure of our Lord is said to have bowed its head as if in veneration of the sacred remains. According to another version of the legend, however, it was when the body of St. Honoré himself was being carried through the city, and was placed for a few moments in St. Firmin's Church, that the figure, which then adorned the rood-screen, bowed its head. In any case, the crucifix of the legend is still

* See 'The Saints in Christian Art,' Vol. I., pp. 241 and 242.

preserved in a chapel of the cathedral, and is interesting not only because of the quaint tradition respecting it, but also because the figure of the Lord is represented in an unusual manner. The head is surmounted, not with a crown of thorns, but one of gold, and the body is completely clothed in a long garment reaching to the feet, which are not crossed, but nailed to the wood separately.

St. Honoré lived to a good old age, and was buried in his own cathedral at Amiens, where he is still held in very high honour. He has, strange to say, been chosen as their patron Saint by the bakers of the whole of France, who frequently use his effigy as their sign, as on a leaden medal found in the Seine, and his most usual attributes are a baker's shovel or a loaf of bread. It would be natural to suppose that this choice was in memory of the miracle of the blessing of the bread related above, but the reason generally given is that when the news of the election of St. Honoré as Bishop reached the remote district where he was born, the old woman who had been his nurse was washing in the village pond the shovel she used for taking bread out of her oven. Astonished at what she heard, she cried, flourishing her shovel in the air, 'I would as soon believe it as that this shovel will put forth leaves,' and, even as she spoke, green twigs appeared upon the wood, which subsequently grew into a flourishing mulberry tree. When, many years afterwards, the bakers of Paris asked the poet Santeuil to write something in honour of their patron Saint, he gave them the following lines :

'Saint Honoré
Est Honoré
Dans sa chapelle
Avec sa pelle.'

a rhyme which, in spite of its inanity, delighted those for whom it was composed.

There is a fairly good statue of St. Honoré in the chapel dedicated to him in Amiens Cathedral, and the sculptures of the south porch include very realistic renderings of the most noteworthy incidents of his legend, including his Consecration with oil from Heaven, the Blessing of the bread and wine by the Divine hand, the Discovery of the relics of the Martyrs, and various miracles of healing, said to have been performed

by the holy Bishop. At the summit of the tympanum containing these fine carvings is a replica of the Crucifix described above, and St. Honoré is introduced attended by acolytes, on one side of the door below.

Other celebrated Bishops of the sixth century were Saints Aubin of Angers, Vigor of Bayeux, Leonor of Brittany, Melanius of Rennes, Vedast of Arras, Marculphus of Nanteuil, Salvius of Albi, Herculanus of Perouse, Leander of Seville, Paul of Léon, and Frediano of Lucca, with whom may be ranked the humble priest, St. Theophilus, surnamed the Penitent.

St. Aubin, or Aubyn, who is well known in England—where several churches are dedicated to him, notably one at Devonport—ruled wisely over the See of Angers for many years, and is occasionally represented in a pulpit, on account of his zeal in preaching; healing the blind, who flocked to him in great numbers; releasing prisoners, whose chains are said to have fallen off in answer to his prayers; or casting out evil spirits. Now and then, in the case of St. Aubin, the Bishop's robes are replaced by armour, to indicate that he resigned a post in the army to dedicate himself to the service of God alone.

St. Vigor is chiefly famous for having destroyed one of the last remaining heathen temples in France, that dedicated to the god Belenus on a mountain near Bayeux, and is generally associated in art with a dragon, because he is said to have slain a venomous beast which had long preyed upon the people of his See.

St. Leonor, or Lunaire, of Brittany, whose emblems in art are a stag beside him and a bell in one hand, is generally spoken of as a Bishop, though he does not seem to have been accredited to any particular see. He is said to have begun life as a labourer in the fields, and to have pressed some stags into his service when his oxen failed him; to have hung his mantle on a sunbeam when preaching in the open air, and to have won an important concession from King Childebert, who, in return for some service the Bishop had rendered, told him he might have all the land from which the sound of his bell could be heard. The Saint placed the officers of the monarch as witnesses several miles off, ascended a hill and rung his bell, which was distinctly audible in a radius of many leagues.

St. Melanius of Rennes is said to have cast out an evil spirit

by boxing the ears of its victim—for which reason his usual attribute in art is a dragon at his feet—and to have wrought many wonderful cures amongst his flock. He also sometimes holds a boat in his hand, because he died on a voyage up the Vilaine and his body is supposed to have been taken back to Rennes in a rudderless vessel without sails, oars, or escort.

St. Vedast, to whom there is a church dedicated in London, is by some authorities said to have been the first instructor in the Christian faith of King Clovis. In any case, he was much honoured by that monarch, at whose baptism he was present, some little time after which he was elected Bishop of Arras. The usual attribute in art of St. Vedast is a bear, which he is dragging along by a rope, in allusion to a legend that, after the cathedral of Arras had been destroyed by the heathen from beyond the Rhine, a bear took refuge in it, and was found there by the Bishop when he came to kneel at the broken altar.

St. Marculphus, of Nanteuil, is said to have been specially successful in curing scrofula during his lifetime, and is still invoked by sufferers from that disease, for which reason he is generally represented touching the chin of a kneeling patient, and is sometimes grouped with St. Cloud, who is supposed to have the same power. It is related of St. Marculphus that he cured with a word a boy bitten by a mad wolf; rescued a hare which fled to him from the hunters by rooting them all to the spot; and gave the Devil, who appeared to him in the form of an old woman, a loaf of bread with a blessing, the holy words compelling the Evil One to resume his own form. St. Marculphus is sometimes represented appearing to one or another of the kings of France, for he it is who is said to have communicated to them, or at least to have confirmed them in, the possession of their power of curing what is known as ‘the king’s evil.’ According to others, however, the faculty of healing was first obtained in the tenth century by Charles the Simple, as a reward for his foundation of the monastery of Corbeny, near Laon, above the tomb of St. Marculphus, whose remains had been transferred there from Nanteuil during the Norman invasion. Moreover, as is well known, the French claim to the miraculous gift is contested by the English, who assert that it was originally granted to St. Edward the Confessor, and

descended to none but kings who could prove relationship to the royal family of England.

St. Salvius, of Albi, is chiefly celebrated on account of the tradition that he died in his cell in a monastery, to which he had retired, and was miraculously restored to life to be elected Bishop of Albi, in Languedoc. For this reason he is generally represented in the robes of a hermit, praying with arms outstretched in the oriental style.

St. Herculanus, of Perouse, whose effigy, with hand upraised in blessing, adorned the coinage of his see as late as the fourteenth century, is said to have been beheaded, by order of Totila, on the ramparts of his cathedral city, in revenge for the obstinate resistance of the inhabitants when it was besieged by the Goths, and he is generally represented holding the instrument of his martyrdom, a sword or knife.

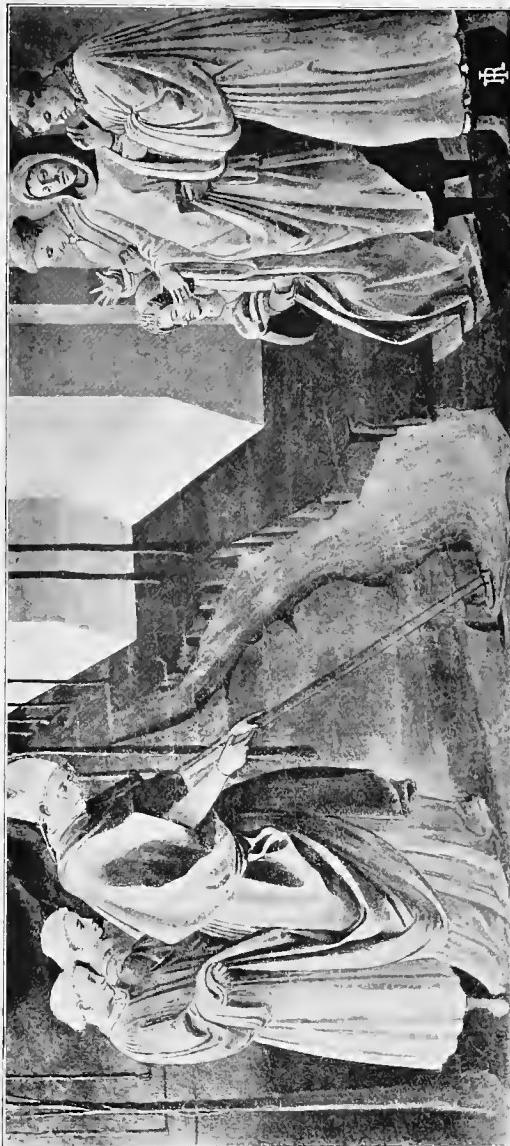
St. Paul of Léon, in Brittany, who is sometimes grouped with the other primitive Bishops of the North of France, is said to have been a native of Cornwall, and was probably the original patron of the many churches dedicated to St. Paul in that county and Devonshire. It is related of him that he dwelt as a hermit on a little island off the coast of France, and that a beloved sister of his lived with some holy women on an islet a little distance off, to which the approach was often very dangerous. One day the sister prayed her brother to bid the waves withdraw, so that the nuns might come and go with greater ease. He did so, and what had been a tract of foaming waters became henceforth a stretch of dry sand. The fame of his holiness and power over the elements led to St. Paul being summoned from his retreat to be made Bishop of Léon, and he reigned over his see with great success for many years. His memory is still preserved in the name of the now deserted town of St. Pol de Léon. He is invoked for protection in storms by the people of Northern France.

St. Leander, Archbishop of Seville at the end of the sixth century, is greatly revered in Spain on account of the zeal with which he preached against the Arians, and is said to have received from St. Gregory the Great an image of the Blessed Virgin made by St. Luke, which the Spaniards claim is still preserved at Guadalupe. Of noble birth, St. Leander was much beloved at the Court of King Leovigildus, even before his election to the See of Seville, and is said to have converted the young

Prince Hermengildus, who, as related above (p. 286), later suffered martyrdom for his refusal to receive the communion from an Arian Bishop. St. Leander died in 596, after a long career of eminent usefulness. He is a familiar figure in Spanish devotional pictures, and his chief attributes are a flaming heart held in one hand, or the triangle, emblem of the Trinity; both characteristic of those who defended the Catholic faith against the Arians; a pen, the emblem of a writer on theology; and an image of the Blessed Virgin, in memory of the one sent to him by St. Gregory. St. Leander is often grouped with his brother prelates, Saints Fulgentius of Carthagena, and Isidore of Seville, or he is seen instructing the young Spanish Prince, who owed so much to his teaching.

St. Frediano of Lucca is said to have been of noble birth, and to have fled from his native land of Scotland to escape marriage with a beautiful girl, to whom he had been betrothed by his parents against his will. He took refuge in Italy, and there his lowly life led to his being elected Bishop of Lucca, where his memory is still held sacred on account of the wonderful miracles he is supposed to have wrought on behalf of his people. On one occasion he is credited with having changed the course of the river Serchio, an incident represented by Fra Filippo Lippi on the predella of an Altar-piece now in Florence Academy. Another time, when he wished to go to visit the tomb of S. Miniato at Florence, and the Arno was so swollen and rough that it was dangerous to cross it, he bid the waves subside, so that he was able to make the transit in safety; and once, when a rock impeded his passage by land, he ordered it to draw back. The rock is still shown on the road to Lucca, and the incident of the calming of the Arno is represented in a fresco by an unknown hand in a seventh century church named after St. Frediano in the city of his adoption.

Of the young priest, St. Theophilus of Adriana, in Sicily, a touching story is told, which is the subject of a fine bas-relief in the tympanum of what is known as the Porte Rouge of the Cathedral of Paris. The future Saint, who was treasurer of a church in his native city, was falsely accused of betraying his trust, and lost his position. Eager to be revenged on his traducers, he consulted a magician, who took him to a lonely spot outside the town, where he introduced him to the Devil, who was holding a Court, surrounded by his satellites. The



Alinari photo

ST. FREDIANO CHANGING THE COURSE OF A RIVER

By Fra Filippo Lippi

[Accademia, Florence]

To face p. 318

evil one received Theophilus graciously and promised him that, if he would deny Christ, he should have his heart's desire, for he would soon be in a position in which he could order the punishment of those who had injured him. It was not enough for him to blaspheme the Lord by word of mouth, he must write his wicked words and sign them with his full name in his own blood. The unhappy man did as he was bid, and the Devil took possession of the manuscript. Theophilus then returned home, and a few days later, to his great surprise, he was appointed to an influential position in the Church. He could now, if he chose, begin his revenge, but his conscience smote him so terribly that he could think of nothing, day or night, but the terrible sin of which he had been guilty.

Day after day the penitent priest prayed for deliverance, and at last, as he knelt at an altar dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, she herself appeared to him, telling him he was forgiven, for she had won back the fatal writing from the Devil. Hardly able to believe his own senses, Theophilus gazed at the glorious visitant without a word, and as he gazed the vision faded away, but at his feet lay the white paper with its letters of blood, and he knew that he was indeed saved. From that day to his death, he earnestly fulfilled the duties of his high office, but never allowed himself to enjoy any of its privileges. He remained a humble penitent to the last, and to him came all who were oppressed with guilt, to unburden their souls.

In the upper portion of the bas-relief at Paris, St. Theophilus is represented Avowing his crime and pointing to a tablet with the fatal blasphemy engraved upon it, in the presence of a Bishop and several kneeling figures. Below he is seen Consulting with the Jewish magician, Making his bargain with the Devil, and Praying to the Blessed Virgin; whilst in the last scene, on the left, the Divine Mother is compelling the evil one to yield up the fatal manuscript. The whole legend is also told in some stained-glass windows at Léon, and in one at Beauvais St. Theophilus is seen kneeling at the feet of the Virgin, who is handing him a scroll.

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